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WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

Central Committee

Minutes of the Forty-Sixth Meeting

Geneva, Switzerland

14-22 September 1995





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**Central Committee
of the World Council of Churches**

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Geneva, Switzerland
14-22 September 1995

World Council of Churches

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FOREWORD

The Central Committee had originally been invited by the National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc. to hold its forty-sixth meeting in Nashville, Tennessee, USA. Unfortunately, due to a number of difficulties encountered during the planning stage, and after discussion with the NBC authorities, the Officers decided that the meeting should take place in Geneva. This decision resulted in an enforced adjustment to the dates fixed for the meeting, which meant that a number of members of Central Committee were unable to attend.

During the period of the meeting, two sessions were assigned to **Regional Meetings**. A **Women's meeting** was held on the evening of 17 September when opportunity was given to listen to reports from some of those who had attended the UN Women's Conference in Beijing and the NGO Forum preceding it.

A **Hearing on the Programme to Overcome Violence** took place on the evening of 15 September, when an attempt was made to share with Central Committee members a progress report on the work done so far to set up this programme, and to seek advice for the next steps in the process.

On September 20, following the sessions on Global Governance, a **Reception** was arranged to which representatives of some of the national Missions to the United Nations based in Geneva were invited. This gave members of Central Committee an opportunity to meet with the representatives from their own countries.

Visits to **local parishes** were arranged on the Sunday morning, 17 September.

A number of informal activities were arranged during the week including confessional meetings, and a Social Evening on Saturday 16 September.

OPENING ACTIONS

I. Worship

The theme running through the worship during this meeting of Central Committee was *For the Healing of the Nations*. The central image was a tree – life-giving, uprooted, dismembered, fashioned into a cross, replanted. Through mime, symbol and word, some of the issues confronting the Central Committee were prayed and sung as cry and hope in the worship of God.

The Opening Worship took place in the Chapel of the Ecumenical Centre on the morning of 14 September. Dr Birgitta Larsson preached the sermon, taking the tree image: «Like trees planted by the water, God, are those who trust in you».

II. Call to Order

The forty-sixth meeting of the Central Committee was called to order by the Moderator, His Holiness Aram I Keshishian, at 9.15 on Thursday 14 September 1995. After welcoming participants, he reminded them that the last meeting had taken place eighteen months previously which meant that there was a heavy agenda. He called upon all members to take active part in the deliberations and actions, so that the work could be completed according to the schedule proposed.

The General Secretary addressed a special word of welcome to the Moderator in his new quality as Catholicos of the Armenian Church (Cilicia) to which he had been elected at the end of June. Dr Raiser assured His Holiness that he was upheld in the prayers of all participants, and his patriarchal blessing would be an important source of strength and guidance for them, both at this meeting and in the years leading up to the Eighth Assembly. The Central Committee had learned with deep gratitude that, in spite of the important new responsibilities laid upon him, His Holiness had indicated his desire to complete his term as Moderator of Central Committee. Participants and staff expressed their good wishes and appreciation to His Holiness Aram for his ministry and leadership.

The Moderator thanked members of Central Committee for their prayers and support, and spoke of the decisive role that the ecumenical movement had played and would continue to play in his life. He owed much to the ecumenical movement and avowed that ecumenism would remain a vital dimension of his ministry and at the same time of the witness and life of his church.

III. Roll Call and Seating of Substitutes

The General Secretary called the roll of Presidents, Officers and members of Central Committee (Appendix I), and presented apologies from some members whose churches were unable to send substitutes: Metr. Daniel of Moldavia and Bukovina, Ms Beatrice Danquah, Ms Violet Rhaburn, Rev. Carlos Sanchez, Rev. Janos Viczian. Apologies had also been received from Bishop Leslie Boseto and HH Pope Shenouda.

The seating of substitutes was **agreed** as follows:

- Dr Pamela Chinnis (until 19 September) and Rev. David Perry (from 20 September) for the Most Rev. Edmond Browning,
- Mr Geoffroy de Turckheim for Prof. Dr André Birmelé (part-time),
- Rt Rev. Terry Finlay for the Most Rev. Michael Peers,
- Rev. Drs J.H. Huttenga for Drs Aukje Westra,
- Ms Kelly Koh for Dr Janice Love (from 18 September)
- Dr Albert Laham for Metr. Elias Audi,
- Dr Mahfouz Adeeb Mitry for Bishop Serapion,
- Rev. Mangedwa Nyathi for Dr Charles Adams,
- Rev. Joan Parrott for Rev. Dr Daniel Weiss (part-time)
- Rev. Caroline Pattiasina-Toreh for Dr Hesina Tetelepta
- Rev. Dr Modeste Rakoto for Rev. J-B. Rakotomaro
- Rev. Klaus Wilkens for Frau Christine Oettel
- Ms Kristen Williams for Mrs Kathryn Bannister
- Very Rev. Dr Lois Wilson for Mrs Marion Best.

The General Secretary then called the names of Delegated Representatives and Delegated Observers, inviting them, together with Advisers and Observers, to stand and be recognized. He also welcomed Rev. Dr Emilio Castro, former WCC General Secretary, who was present for the opening session.

IV. In Memoriam

A moment of silence was observed in memory of a number of a number of friends and colleagues who had been close to the World Council and the ecumenical community and who had passed away since the last meeting:

- Dr Karl Hertz, a former director of the Ecumenical Institute, Bossey,
- Dr Adriaan Geense, also a former director of the Ecumenical Institute, Bossey,
- Mr Atze van der Kooi, former WCC staff member,
- Rev. Glen Garfield Williams, former general secretary of the Conference of European Churches (CEC),
- Deacon Tom Dorris, a former editor of the WCC's Ecumenical Press Service,
- Rev. David Lewis, a UK Presbyterian minister and former WCC staff member,
- Ms Jean Fraser, a former WCC staff member;
- OKR Dr Walter Arnold, a member of Central Committee since 1983,
- Bishop Kingsley Muttiah, president of Conference of the Methodist Church of Sri Lanka and a member WCC Central Committee since 1991;

Among others in the ecumenical world who had died in recent months were:

- Dr Immanuel David, Indian Lutheran theologian,
- Bishop Shen Yifan, Vice-president and general secretary of the China Christian Council,
- His Holiness Vasken I, Catholicos of the Armenian Apostolic Church (Etchmiadzin),
- Rev. Johan Heyns, of the Dutch Reformed Church of South Africa,
- Fr Cyrille Argenti, French Orthodox priest active in international ecumenical affairs,
- Dr Christian G.K. Baëta, African ecumenist and theologian,
- Rev. Willem van der Zee, general secretary of the Netherlands Council of Churches,
- Dr (Sir) Francis Ibiam, a former President of the WCC, of Enugu, Nigeria,
- Dr Edwin Taylor, former member of Central Committee and of the Faith and Order Commission, from the Caribbean.

V. Agenda and Timetable

The General Secretary introduced the proposed agenda, which, with one suggested change, was **adopted**.

VI. Minutes of Previous Meeting

No corrections having been received to the Minutes of the forty-fifth meeting of the Central Committee held in Johannesburg, South Africa, 20-28 January 1994, they were **approved** as circulated.

VII. Appointment of Committees

As was customary, it was **agreed** that the *Executive Committee* act as Staffing and Nominations Committee of Central Committee.

The General Secretary indicated that, with a few modifications, the membership of *Unit Committees* and the *General Secretariat Committee* remained as before. Substitutes and new members of Central Committee normally replaced members in the same Committee.

Due to the absence of Metropolitan Daniel, moderator of the Unit I Committee, it was **agreed** that the vice-moderator, Ms Nenevi Seddoh, act as moderator and Dr Paul Crow as vice-moderator for this meeting. It was further **agreed** that Mr John Briggs replace Mr Charles Ajalat as vice-moderator of the General Secretariat Committee. In the absence of Ms Marion Best, Dr Ruth Page acted as vice-moderator of Unit II Committee.

Dr Nababan proposed that membership of the *Finance Committee* remain as before (with the exception of Dr Walter Arnold who had passed away in April 1994), with the addition of Rev. Wesley Granberg-Michaelson; this was **agreed**.

VIII. Stewards

The General Secretary invited the stewards to introduce themselves: 39 young people, coming from 33 different countries. The Moderator greeted them warmly and participants expressed appreciation for their presence and their attention to the tasks that would facilitate the functioning of the meeting.

IX. New Members of Central Committee

On behalf of the Executive Committee, Dr Nababan reported that a number of nominees were being recommended as new members of Central Committee to replace members who had died or who had resigned in the last eighteen months. There being no dissenting voice, the following new members were **approved** and welcomed by the Moderator:

- Bishop Eberhardt **Renz**, EKD, Germany
- Rev. Wesley **Granberg-Michaelson**, Reformed Church in America
- Rev. Duleep **Fernando**, Methodist Church, Sri Lanka – unfortunately unable to attend this meeting due to illness,
- Ato Gezahegne **Yayneshate**, Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church
- Bishop **Lavrentije** (Trifunovic), Serbian Orthodox Church
- Dr Heinz **Rüegger**, Federation of Swiss Protestant Churches – FEPS
- Miss Silva **Ghazelyan**, Armenian Apostolic Church – Etchmiadzin.

X. Applications for Membership

Dr Nababan said that the Executive Committee had studied applications for membership from nine churches and from one national council of churches; these were referred to the General Secretariat Committee for further consideration (see report on p. 129-130).

XI. Other Membership Matters

Dr Nababan reported the recommendation of the Executive Committee that membership of the Bossey Board be approved. This was **agreed** as follows:

Dr Robert Welsh – Moderator	Christian Church/Disciples, USA
Dr Elizabeth Amoah	Methodist Church, Ghana
Ms Tilisi Bryce	Anglican, Tonga
Rev. Wanda Deifelt	Lutheran Church, Brazil
Prof. Olivier Fatio	Reformed, Switzerland
Rev Rose Hudson-Wilkin	Church of England, UK
Rev. Ipe Joseph	Mar Thoma Church, India
Rev. Sirirat Pusurinkham	Church of Christ in Thailand (USA)
Rev. Kristin Rossier	Reformed, Switzerland
Rev. Constantin Scouteris	Church of Greece

Dr Baldwin Sjollema	Reformed, Netherlands/Switzerland
Dr Dietrich Werner	EKD, Germany
Archimandrite N. Zhiliaev	Russian Orthodox Church
Msgr. Mutiso Mbinda	RCC, Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, Rome
Dr H.-R. Weber (adviser)	Reformed, Switzerland
Prof. Dr H. Visser 't Hooft (adviser)	Reformed, Netherlands

ex officio: Director of Unit I
or: Deputy General Secretary – Programmes

XII. Introduction to the work of Central Committee

- a) Prof. Anna Marie Aagaard commented briefly on the work of the small structure review group that had been appointed to review the working of the new **structure**. The Executive Committee had given careful consideration to the proposed recommendations for minor adjustments, which were outlined by Prof. Aagaard. Members were asked to express their views through the Unit Committees to the General Secretariat Committee which would present recommendations at a later stage (see report, p. 189ff).
- b) Dr Soritua Nababan referred to a report of the group that had worked on issues related to membership in the World Council, and in particular on the **Meaning of Membership**. This included some proposed changes to the Rules pertaining to criteria for membership and relationships with ecumenical partner bodies (see p. 199ff). It was referred to the General Secretariat Committee (see report, p 130ff), and a revised draft text can be found in Appendix X.

XIII. Public Issues

The General Secretary reminded members of the procedures with regard to Public Issues, noting that requests for additional items should be presented to the Moderator of the Public Issues Committee (PIC) by the following day.

The CCIA staff had prepared a background document that had been reviewed by the Executive and referred to Central Committee. Three actions were proposed:

- a statement on the **Status of Jerusalem**: Sometimes it was necessary to bring WCC policy up to date in light of more recent developments, and the Executive felt this was a case in point, especially in view of the General Secretary's visit to Jerusalem in May 1995;
- a statement on **nuclear testing**, about which grave concern was expressed following the decisions by President Chirac and by the Chinese to proceed with further tests in spite of widespread criticism;
- the PIC would be asked to consider whether it was appropriate to propose some action regarding the continuing war in the former Yugoslavia.

The proposed procedures were **approved**.

Membership of the **Public Issues Committee** was **agreed** as follows:

Dr Aaron Tolen – Moderator	Presbyterian Church, Cameroon
Ms Cristina Bösenberg	Evangelical Church, River Plate, Argentina
Rev. Violet Bredt	United Church of Zambia
Ms Makiko Hirata	United Church of Christ, Japan
Mr Albert Laham	Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch
Bishop Lavrentije	Serbian Orthodox Church
Dr Janice Love	United Methodist Church, USA
Ms Nadeje Mandysova	Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren
Dr Park Jong Wha	Presbyterian Church in Rep. of Korea
Dr Georges Tssetsis	Ecumenical Patriarchate
Dr Klaus Wilkens	EKD/Lutheran, Germany
Ms Tungane Williams	Cook Islands Christian Church
Dr Lois Wilson	United Church of Canada
Bishop Zacharias Mar Theophilos	Mar Thoma Syrian Church of Malabar,

The Public Issues Committee was empowered to coopt other members of the Central Committee whose advice was required on specific matters under consideration.

PRELIMINARY REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE MODERATOR

Ms Rantakari noted that since the last meeting in January 1994, Central Committee members had received Financial Reports for 1993 and 1994. That for 1993 was encouraging – a surplus had been achieved, while reserves and funds had been increased, showing a measure of financial equilibrium.

The 1994 Report however indicated that, although expenditure had remained within budget, income had come in significantly lower than anticipated. This was due to (a) the high value of the Swiss franc against all other currencies, (b) the decline in value of investment portfolios which meant there was no income available for distribution; (c) an overall decline in income, even in original currencies, since some donors were themselves facing financial difficulties. The shortfall on general operations amounted to CHF3.4 million, and further losses were incurred on exchange and investment values.

The current year's budget had been reviewed and savings agreed, but a shortfall of CHF 2.7 million was anticipated on general operations, and it would again be necessary to draw on reserves. A further shortfall – of CHF 2.8 million – was anticipated in 1996.

It was important to differentiate between short-term fluctuations and a longer term trend in income. A series of tables showed that in real terms, income support for the Council had reduced by over 20% in the period since 1984. It was therefore necessary, in trying to define what this trend meant for the WCC, to ask questions such as: what kind of World Council did the member churches want? Was the declining trend due to difficulties being faced by the churches, or to a lesser ecumenical commitment? Was this a temporary or a longer term phenomenon? The Common Understanding and Vision process was crucial for the future, but in the meantime immediate and medium term action had to be taken.

The Finance Committee urged Units and Offices to continue their efforts to prioritise and review their working style. Every effort must be made to increase income, especially from more than half the member churches (166) which do

not contribute at all. At the same time financial plans and policies were being reviewed with a view to improving the management of the Council's resources. A comprehensive financial plan was needed in the period up to the Assembly, and it was the responsibility of Central Committee to ensure that the Council is equipped to fulfil its calling in the 21st century.

Rev. Ian Allsop asked whether the WCC had cash flow analysis in its management systems; this had become an accepted part of modern financial management and he felt it would have been helpful in handling budget variances. Mr Davies replied that there was indeed cash flow control, and discussions with the auditors were in process to discover the best way of presenting a cash flow statement in future Reports if that was desired by the Finance Committee. He pointed out that international standards were based on commercial enterprises but there were none laid down for non-profit making bodies like the WCC; not all such standards applied equally to the Council.

REPORTS OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY AND OF THE MODERATOR

I. Report of the General Secretary¹

Strengthening Relationships

In the first part of his report, Dr Raiser outlined the actions taken in the period since the last meeting of Central Committee in January 1994, focusing on two dimensions: strengthening relationships, and coordinating programmes.

Maintaining and strengthening relationships with member churches and the wider ecumenical constituency was one of the primary responsibilities of the General Secretary and his colleagues, especially the Office for Church and Ecumenical Relations (OCER). In particular, new contacts were being established with evangelical, pentecostal and «independent» Christian communities, especially in Latin America and Africa. The first publication of a WCC Yearbook was an effort to intensify the ways of communicating the Council's work. However, communication was a two-way affair, and though the Council was often criticised for not communicating effectively with the member churches, there was often little response even when this was specifically requested. Without a sense of mutuality on the part of the member churches, any effort to communicate would only have a limited effect.

Aware that nothing could replace personal face-to-face communication, Dr Raiser had visited member churches, councils and regional organizations in 38 countries in the past eighteen months. He expressed appreciation for the welcome he and those accompanying him had received; there was a desire and willingness to be more fully involved in the Council's life. Also noteworthy was the fact that more churches were adopting the practice of visiting Geneva for encounters with staff – another effective means of communication and deepening relationships.

Dr Raiser had also made an official visit to the Vatican which included an audience with Pope John Paul II, as well as encounters with the Pontifical

¹ The full text appears in *The Ecumenical Review*, Vol.48, no.1, 1996.

Council for Promoting Christian Unity and those dicasteries with whom the WCC is or should be cooperating. In spite of thirty years of the Joint Working Group's existence, our exchange with the RCC remains limited and there was little awareness of the Council's work, the evolving ecumenical situation and the challenge this posed to all our churches. The difference in nature, orientation and ways of operating have to be acknowledged and respected, but the comprehensive task of the WCC to further cooperation of the churches in their missionary and educational efforts, as well as in their witness to justice, peace and reconciliation and in furthering ecumenical renewal, meets with only limited response on the part of the Vatican dicasteries.

The Pope's encyclical letter «On Commitment to Ecumenism» (*Ut Unum Sint*), published shortly after Dr Raiser's visit, was the first comprehensive document presenting the pontifical teaching on ecumenism, and should be welcomed by the WCC. But while we join the fervent prayer and the attitude of expectant hope expressed in it, we must also preserve a sense of realism. Yet, if all leaders of WCC member churches, all Roman Catholic bishops, those responsible for Vatican dicasteries and for WCC Units were to take the teaching of the Pope to heart and act accordingly, the ecumenical situation would be different from what it is today.

Coordinating Programmes

The last eighteen months had been a period of intensive programmatic activity in the Units and Offices. Unit Commissions had met; programmes had passed the half-way mark between two assemblies and most would reach a provisional conclusion during 1996 or early 1997, after which all efforts would concentrate on the tasks involved in assembly preparation. The General Secretary highlighted some of the areas of work currently going on in the four programme Units, as well as some of the inter-unit programmes being undertaken.

Since the recent review of the new structure, the financial situation of the WCC had given rise to new questions and concerns as to whether WCC programmes reflect and respond adequately to the rapidly changing ecumenical situation. If budget reductions became inevitable, how were we to arrive at the necessary decisions? Efforts to coordinate programmes continued, and there was a need to prioritize in relation to income, but no process had so far been initiated on a regular basis. Although only limited readjustments in structure were being suggested, further rearrangements may be called for under the pressure of limited resources.

Further attempts had been made to clarify the roles of Unit Commissions and Unit Committees and the kinds of reports required to allow for communicating programmes in the most helpful way. It was proposed that the activities report of a Unit be seen as that of the respective Commission (rather than of staff), and that it be considered as part of the minutes of Central Committee. The reports of the Unit Committees should focus only on recommendations for action and the arguments necessary to substantiate these.

Searching for «Common Understanding and Vision»

The General Secretary devoted the main part of his report to the process known as **Common Understanding and Vision of the WCC** (CUV). An interim report outlined developments since Central Committee in 1989 when the idea was first mooted, summarised the few reactions received from member churches to the study guide, and indicated the preliminary results of consultations with various Unit commissions and working groups. (see also report on p. 123ff).

An important step was reached when the Assembly Planning Committee suggested that the CUV process might culminate in the presentation to the Assembly of a *charter* which could serve both as a statement of common ecumenical perspective and as a basis for inviting the churches through their delegates to a solemn act of re-commitment to the ecumenical movement at the dawn of the 21st century. An analysis of the material that had been assembled led to the identification of four areas of enquiry: (a) the nature and task of the WCC as a *fellowship of churches*; (b) the role of the WCC within the *one ecumenical movement*; (c) forms of representation, participation and communication within the fellowship of the WCC; and (d) steps towards an integrating ecumenical vision.

Conversations with ecumenical partners had revealed an intense interest in this effort on the part of the WCC. There was a growing conviction that the changes taking place at global level in the life of the churches and in the ecumenical and religious situation, challenge all partners in the ecumenical movement to reflect on the orientation of their work and to assess together what instruments would be necessary in the future to serve this «one ecumenical movement». It was clear that the enquiry had to go beyond the WCC proper, because, while it was still the most comprehensive ecumenical instrument on world level, the ecumenical movement had become a polycentric network and the WCC could not pretend to be its main centre. This polycentric character made it imperative to ask how its «oneness» or «wholeness» could be preserved against the tendencies towards fragmentation and competitiveness, especially in view of shrinking resources.

Approaching the question of a common understanding from this perspective, it could not be separated from the wider issue of clarifying the understanding of the ecumenical movement – which is neither identical with nor «owned» by any one of its institutional manifestations. We believe that this ecumenical movement is not ours but God's in Christ through the living presence of the Holy Spirit. Beyond this definition, there is a wide range of understandings regarding the goals, methods and actors in the ecumenical movement. For some, the main *raison d'être* is the search for the visible unity of the church. Others understand the ecumenical calling to include the common missionary task of the churches and the responsibility to work for justice, peace and the integrity of creation. It would not further the oneness of the ecumenical if one of these definitions of its goals were to be made normative by choosing one or other line of tradition.

But a new ecumenical generation was emerging which would shape the ecumenical movement in the 21st century; it was beginning to articulate its own understanding in a situation of church and world that is radically different from what it was even 25 years ago when Vatican II ended. The polycentric character of the ecumenical movement therefore calls for an inclusive framework which keeps the differences of understanding among the partners in a mutually committed dialogue aiming at a clearer discernment and faithfulness to the «common calling».

Currently the WCC is the only instrument of the ecumenical movement which could provide such a framework – but can it? does it respond to this expectation? The WCC is constituted as a fellowship of churches; its membership includes mainly the historic churches of Protestant and Orthodox tradition. But without the full participation of the Roman Catholic Church, and the evangelical, pentecostal and independent churches, its inclusiveness is severely limited. Efforts to deepen the ecclesial and spiritual understanding of the WCC as a fellowship of churches have not necessarily led to greater inclusiveness; they sometimes even create new barriers.

The WCC's constitution reflects the basic understanding of the WCC as a «fellowship of churches», and, although recognising «other ecumenical Christian organizations», it has not been able to serve as the integrating and inclusive instrument of the ecumenical movement in terms of maintaining its «wholeness». The proposed revision of the Rules tries to address this limitation.

In order to respond to the present ecumenical challenge, it would seem that the WCC should strive to recapture and articulate afresh its double character as a

«fellowship of churches» and as a special «instrument of the ecumenical movement». The «common understanding» of the WCC should not only reflect its task of nurturing and deepening the ecclesial relationships between its member churches, but also articulate its calling to safeguard and further the «oneness» or «wholeness» of the ecumenical movement. Care must be taken to protect the integrity of the WCC as it has evolved historically. Dr Raiser offered two options that might be considered:

- a) The WCC could open a second category of membership or association for those ecumenical partners which are not churches; this would normally apply to ecumenical Christian organizations operating at international level, but should also make provision for the status of «associate councils of churches».
- b) The WCC could offer itself as the organizing agent of a forum or association of ecumenical Christian organizations integrating and formalizing the present consultative structures of general secretaries of REOs, CWCs and so on. The WCC would itself become a member of such a forum which, however, would be independent from it.

Other models could be developed provided the aim remained to serve the «wholeness» of the ecumenical movement and to offer a framework for mutually committed dialogue. The Basis of the WCC should be considered as a common criterion for membership and participation.

Dr Raiser went on to enumerate some of the the far-reaching implications that a move in such a direction would have for the Council:

- it would strengthen its character as a fellowship of churches prepared to accept the ecclesial discipline and mutual accountability as an expression of their commitment to work towards the goal of visible unity in the sense of full communion and mutual recognition;
- it would emphasise that the WCC was not simply an association of churches serving practical interests of exchange and cooperation, but a manifestation of the constitutive relatedness of the churches in the body of Christ by virtue of the one baptism we have received;
- it would give visible expression to the new ecumenical situation of growing de facto reconciliation, in which what unites the churches exceeds what still divides them and thus allows them to recover their true conciliarity;

- it would be a clear recognition that the ecumenical movement, as a response to God's calling for common witness and service and for the renewal of the whole people of God, is wider than the membership of the WCC.

Many of the programmatic activities presently carried out in parallel and with little coordination by the WCC and various other ecumenical organizations could become joint programmes, respecting the institutional autonomy of the partners but pooling human and financial resources. Thus the model of a number of functional coalitions, held together in a network of ecumenical Christian organizations, could be considered; the exact implications would have to be spelled out, but it should facilitate a more effective use and sharing of the increasingly limited resources available.

Dr Raiser stressed that the above was the result of his personal reflections based on the process so far and was offered as a stimulus for discussion.

What did this mean for the further process on «Common Understanding and Vision» up to the Harare Assembly? If there was agreement that the WCC as a «fellowship of churches» could not be understood properly apart from its place and role within the «one ecumenical movement», then efforts should be directed towards the formulation of a basic policy declaration on «the ecumenical movement, the churches and the World Council of Churches». Such a statement should aim at re-stating and reaffirming the understanding of the character and goal of the WCC in the present ecumenical situation and on the eve of the 21st century. Then, after discussion and response from member churches and two readings in Central Committee, it should be submitted to the assembly for final approval and serve as the basis for a solemn act of recommitment by the member churches to the WCC on the occasion of the 50th anniversary. Once a basic agreement was reached about the direction in which to move, attempts should be made to spell out the constitutional and organizational implications for the WCC and the other organizations concerned. Any proposal for constitutional amendments would have to be presented to Central Committee in 1997 and then be sent to member churches.

Any declaration on «understanding» the WCC within the one ecumenical movement should probably be separated from a «vision» statement or «charter». It should aim at projecting a vision that embraces the ecumenical movement as a whole, and should aim at the widest possible reception, seeking to renew and broaden commitment to the ecumenical movement among the whole people of God. To inspire the whole ecumenical movement with the spirit of jubilee in

remembrance and repentance, in commitment to rebuilding life in sustainable community and in expectant hope, could thus become the thrust of the vision statement which would be offered by the WCC as a kind of «ecumenical charter» for the 21st century.

In conclusion, Dr Raiser said it was his conviction that the present situation in the world, in the churches and in the ecumenical movement as a whole, obliged the WCC to take courageous steps forward in order to rekindle the ecumenical spirit and to provide orientation and leadership for the one ecumenical movement on the eve of the 21st century. The Harare Assembly was the appropriate moment, the *kairos* for this initiative. May God grant us the imagination to discern this opportunity and the courage to face together the challenges that lie ahead.

Discussion

Bishop Rogerson elaborated on the work being done by Faith and Order in relation to the CUV process. This was focusing on three points: a) the common calling, b) the place of Christian World Communions (CWCs) which will have an important role to play in the future; and c) the ecclesial nature of the WCC. He was confident that some interesting ideas would result from the efforts being undertaken.

Mr Ajalat regretted that the present structure seemed to lay less emphasis on what many felt to be the primary goal of the Council – the search for the visible unity of the church. The fact that no plenary session was planned at this meeting of Central Committee was also a source of disappointment.

Bishop Bue saw the WCC as the *motor* of the ecumenical movement with its energy coming from Jesus Christ and his calling to visible unity. He feared that the WCC was drawing away from its original intention of being a *council of churches* due to its tendency to englobe many different movements.

Was the General Secretary not creating an unreal contradiction by stating that there should be a distinction between the WCC as a fellowship of churches and as an instrument of the ecumenical movement? asked Dr Blei. The WCC Constitution defines the Council as a «fellowship of churches», but the issues of renewal and action in favour of justice in the world are included as well. When the WCC was first formed, there was a clear choice to make it a fellowship of *churches*, not a fellowship of movements, and he wished to remain with that option. At the same time, the movement for renewal – the so-called wider ecumenical movement – should be included as part of what the WCC is.

Dr Patelos felt these reflections must be seen in their context, namely, in the midst of the conflicts within cultures that exist in so many places today and too easily lead to war; this could have negative consequences for our further reflection. Secondly, it was important that the Council should be a visible presence in the world as it brings churches together in the search for unity. He underlined the need to give careful attention to the ecclesial nature of the WCC.

Dr Park Jong Wha asked whether the WCC was a fellowship of *member* churches rather than a fellowship of churches within the one ecumenical movement? He stressed the need to enlarge the membership in order to further and deepen our ecumenical fellowship – so that the fellowship of churches was necessarily one of member churches. The WCC as a fellowship was a mechanism for broadening the fellowship of the church and its people. How can we integrate this fellowship of churches and church people together in this mechanism that is the WCC?

On the question of communication, Dr Tveter agreed with the General Secretary's challenge, but wondered what kind of issues we communicate about. More thinking was needed on whether materials sent to the member churches were adequately understandable in all the different settings and contexts in which the churches find themselves. Secondly, we have to acknowledge that different understandings of the ecumenical calling inevitably exist, not only between the WCC and the Vatican, for example. Thirdly, she saw a conflict between the desire for the WCC not to be just another international NGO, but at the same time broadening its base and thereby including new issues.

Mr Akhura asked the General Secretary and other WCC visitors to Kenya to make contact with the member churches and Central Committee members in the area so that greater advantage could be taken of their presence; he felt that Kenya tended to be seen only as the headquarters of the AACC.

Dr Supit stressed the importance in speaking about the ecumenical movement of including the Roman Catholic Church and evangelical groups; this wider perspective to enable these to participate more fully should be looked at. He asked in what terms the General Secretary envisaged the continuing dialogue with the RCC in the period leading up to the assembly, and whether ways could be found to bring in the RCC and evangelical groups so that a clearer mutual understanding could be reached.

Metr. Athanasios referred to the update given by the General Secretary on recent developments in the RCC. He felt there was a desire on the part of many people that the RCC would one day become a member of the World Council of Churches. On the question of a possible broadening of membership, the Orthodox have from time to time questioned the acceptance of other churches and he warned that any such action should be preceded by careful consideration of the issues involved.

The General Secretary had helped clarify how the CUV study was related to the role of the total ecumenical movement, but Dr Tanner felt it was impossible to understand the total ecumenical movement, or the WCC's place within it, without stressing some prior understandings of the kind of unity and renewal, unity and reconciliation, that Christians were seeking for the sake of the world. There was a need to struggle for some vision that would both undergird the WCC and hold the disparate parts of its work together in a logical way.

Dr Tanner hoped that the CUV process would be so radical that fundamental questions would be raised: a) about the relationship of the WCC to vision and reconciliation and unity and koinonia; b) about the place of the WCC in the total ecumenical movement; c) regarding the relation of CWCs to the WCC, without pre-judging the question of membership of the RCC or of evangelical groups; d) about the relation of churches and movements, since for her the movements were not distinct over against the churches. The question was therefore how to show the distinctiveness of churches being together while offering the necessary way for the movements to make their contribution appropriately?

Dr Turner saw the concept of a «polycentric» ecumenical movement as a fresh understanding which required more thought and theological reflection: how can we be a polycentric movement, embracing all the churches in the world?

Taking up the General Secretary's point about improving communication, Ms Paulin underlined the importance of the kind of dialogue and face-to-face visits with member churches which is possible in the framework of Central Committee meetings outside Geneva. She understood that the financial situation made this difficult at the present time but she challenged Central Committee to think about more efficient ways of dealing with these problems than limiting meetings to Geneva.

Dr Mandeng felt there had been too much talk about the ecumenical movement and asked when the time would come when we could talk about an ecumenical

church? This did not imply uniformity; diversity should always be encouraged. But after 50 years of existence in the ecumenical movement it was time to move ahead.

Mrs Soedjatmoko spoke of the problems of Christians in Asia who are in a minority situation and face constant challenges from those of other religions. To increase the number of churches and to feel one with them would be a further source of strength in confronting the many kinds of problems.

Dr Wilson did not think that protecting the ecclesial nature of the WCC would be endangered by strengthening the wholeness of the WCC and the ecumenical movement: these were complementary rather than threatening. With many new expressions of Christianity claiming the name of Jesus Christ, so-called minority churches were becoming sidelined. There must be a way of being in interchange that would strengthen the wholeness of the ecumenical movement. In Canada, one of the ways that ecumenical work had been done in the past two decades had been through ecumenical coalitions; this was an effective way of sharing resources.

Ms Rani pointed out that the issue of women was a concern of the whole ecumenical community – it was not separate. She regretted that material on the Ecumenical Decade of the Churches in Solidarity with Women had to a large extent reached the Women's Desks of the churches rather than the church leaders; this was an issue of the human being and should have been treated as such.

Dr Wilkens was grateful for the impetus provided by the General Secretary for the process towards CUV; if some common understanding could be reached prior to the next assembly it might help improve the financial situation also. He agreed that polycentrism was something that had to be faced but he urged that it be taken up with the aim of bringing about a greater oneness and communion, not by trying to make polycentrism into part of the institutional structure.

Response by the General Secretary

Dr Raiser affirmed his wish to provoke the kind of debate that would lead beyond the status quo, thus leading us forward.

In response to Ms Paulin, Dr Raiser pointed out that the Executive Committee would continue to meet outside Geneva, and numerous smaller consultations

organised by the Units and Offices regularly took place in different parts of the world. These offered better possibilities for communication with the host church(es) than Central Committee, which is too big and has too full an agenda to allow for sufficient local contacts.

Responding to Dr Tveter, he agreed that difficulties of communication «may also be a matter of putting the right question» – the churches may not always recognise that it is their question we are asking. If a church had nothing to share on a particular issue, it would be helpful for us to be informed.

On Mr Ajalat's question about the lack of a plenary on the unity of the church, Dr Raiser pointed out that these sessions were carefully selected foci on issues to engage Central Committee in a process of discussion. At the previous meeting there had been such a session, reporting on the Fifth World Conference on Faith and Order; this time, other issues had been selected.

On the CUV process, responding to Dr Blei, Dr Raiser pointed out that to reflect on what was the difference between a fellowship of churches and the wider ecumenical movement, and what holds them inseparably together, was the task that had to be addressed. Current official documents on the self-understanding of the WCC did not respond fully to that challenge.

To Dr Park, Dr Raiser said he had to ask himself what the difference was between being a church in a fellowship, and being a member church in a fellowship. Was membership a more demanding form of being involved in the fellowship, or could one be part of a fellowship without accepting the mutual responsibility? He was not sure, in view of the wider spiritual fellowship of member churches that had accepted certain obligations. He was concerned that this fellowship of member churches be as inclusive as possible, but it was necessary to remain realistic about the fact that the more we make it a mutually committed fellowship, the more we establish barriers. This was an ecclesiological, theological and institutional challenge that had to be faced.

The polycentric character of the ecumenical movement was a fact that could not be denied. But the old dream that the whole ecumenical movement could be embraced in one global structure had gone. Dr Raiser said he was trying to probe what was the organisational, practical expression and rationale for living in an open network that did not depend on the systematic structure but nevertheless expressed that oneness/wholeness, rather than giving in to pluralism/polycentrism as the last word. The answer to this challenge still had to be sought.

Several speakers had mentioned «movements», but Dr Raiser was not aware that he had used this term. He had spoken of the ecumenical movement and ecumenical Christian organisations, but these would not necessarily see themselves as «movements». He noted the fear that seemed to exist that these «movements» might invade the WCC and change its basic ecclesial character. He did not share that fear. In his view, the question that still had to be addressed in relation to the CUV process was: how was the WCC related to the other institutional partners in the ecumenical movement?

II. Report of the Moderator²

After greeting participants in the spirit of Christian love and fellowship, the Moderator outlined the decisions taken by the Executive Committee at its three meetings since the last full session of the Central Committee in Johannesburg in January 1994. Members had received the minutes of the Executive's meetings held in Bucharest, Romania, September 1994, and in Geneva, February 1995. The Moderator referred in particular to work done in relation to preparations for the Eighth Assembly (1998); reviews of the present WCC structure and of criteria for membership in the Council; the future of the Special Fund to Combat Racism. He also mentioned aspects of some of the Council's current programmatic activities.

The Moderator devoted the major part of his report to an extensive reflection on the theme of **Gospel and Culture**. Although this has been an ecumenical concern from the beginning, this complex issue has re-emerged in a new context. The Central Committee in Johannesburg called the Council and its member churches «to explore afresh the relations between the Gospel and cultures and its implications for the pluralistic societies of today». This study process would lead to the Conference on World Mission and Evangelism (CWME) to take place in Brazil at the end of 1996 with the theme *Called to One Hope: the Gospel in Diverse Cultures*. It would then become one of the major foci of the Eighth Assembly in 1998.

Pluralism had become a global reality penetrating all spheres of life, introducing new fears, hopes and challenges. Secondly, due to the close inter-action between culture, religion and ethnicity, cultures have become sources of division and

² The full text can be found in *The Ecumenical Review*, vol.48, no.1, 1996

tension. And thirdly, the identity of Western society has evolved into a secular, technological one. The encounter between Gospel and cultures in today's pluralistic societies thus posed a challenge to the churches to develop a new vision of God's mission in the world. Today's question had become: how to liberate, transform and re-orient cultures?

Cultures today are in deep crisis, said the Moderator, since they have become the scene of new powers of evil and destruction. He went on to describe culture as embracing the wholeness of language, tradition, beliefs, institutions and customs that hold a particular community together. Within this reality, religion played an important role. Christianity sees culture as having instrumental and transitory value; consequently, the Christian gospel must take root in every culture through its own cultural forms, patterns, norms and values.

The world was moving towards one dominant mono-culture which threatens humanity and the whole creation. Based on profit and exploitation, while denying participation, sharing and equal rights, it is one of the results of modern technology and the market economy. A product of Western culture, it is dominated by economic materialism and sustained by a growth-oriented value that disregards the dignity of the human person and the integrity of creation.

In the midst of cultures of fear, hopelessness, violence and death, how do we proclaim the Gospel? How can the Gospel by its life-generating action become a source of liberation, renewal and transformation? The Gospel is Jesus Christ; it is the living encounter between God and humanity. With this understanding of the nature of the gospel, the Moderator outlined some of the aspects pertaining to its role in contemporary cultures.

From indigenization to contextualization: The Gospel becomes relevant when it is communicated to people through their own culture; it is received, experienced and proclaimed through a culture; it is expressed in different ways at different times. But the various cultural expressions of Christian faith must enter into dialogue with one another. Was it not the task of the ecumenical movement to develop an ecumenical hermeneutic which would establish mutual understanding among the churches as they proclaim the gospel in diverse cultural contexts?

The Gospel should not simply be transmitted from one culture to another: it must be re-incarnated, re-owned, by people in their own cultural patterns and values. The Orthodox Churches have a rich experience of rooting the gospel in their

cultures in such a way that it permeates all aspects of community life. In an Orthodox context one has to speak of gospel/culture identification. The Moderator spoke of the penetration of the gospel into Armenian life, described as a process of «Armenianization» of the Christian faith.

The gospel should be taken to all people, cultures and lands, but in crossing frontiers there must be respect and sensitivity to the cultural values and norms of the other; missionaries must not seek to impose their own culture, as happened in the past and is happening again in parts of Eastern Europe with the arrival of Western sects and the distorted gospel they bring.

The gospel transcends every culture and cannot be identified with any particular culture. Christ meets us in our own cultural contexts; the gospel is affirmed *through* cultures, not *in* them. Culture is an instrument, a framework to embody and articulate the gospel.

There is a fear that churches are substituting culture for the gospel. This gives rise to a number of questions, the answers to which provide the alternative vision being sought by the ecumenical movement in the reflection process on gospel and cultures. This vision affirms that the gospel creates a dialogue of cultures, finally leading people to one Christ through cultural diversities. Care must be taken lest the growing global ecumenical culture dominate the culture of a particular church. A contextual approach to mission is needed which avoids both indigenization and globalization, conceiving mission as the reincarnation of the gospel in a context that is open to interaction between cultures.

Pluralism: a fear or a hope? The question as to how to proclaim the gospel in a multi-cultural context has become a matter of priority. The Moderator observed that cultures are no longer self-contained – there is constant dialogue and interaction. Old boundaries have disappeared: the world has become one community where cultures inter-relate. This inter-relatedness is affirmed by the gospel; a dialogue of cultures is integral to the nature of the gospel. However it must be pointed out that this dialogical interaction is between Western culture with its advanced technology and a subordinate non-Western culture, which means that it may result in domination or conflict. Secondly, minorities tend to maintain a cultural rigidity, seeing culture as a safe refuge for survival. Hence any threat to culture is a threat against their existence.

The whole gospel for the whole world – this is the missionary calling of the church. Dialogue is not an alternative to mission. There is a distinction between witness

and dialogue, but their inter-relatedness must be affirmed. There is a growing openness to people of other cultures and faiths, and a better understanding of the ways in which gospel and cultures interact.

A criterion for judging culture: The ecumenical movement has not been able to spell out clearly such a «gospel criterion». Was this not the time to work together for an ecumenical ethics that outlines the demands and imperatives of the gospel? to re-emphasize the inter-connectedness between mission and ethics?

Cultures have no meaning without God's revealing presence which transcends all cultural patterns, norms and values. The gospel should reject any kind of cultural superiority or hierarchy of cultures; all cultures are equal but at the same time full of inherent ambiguities. The gospel should re-orient cultures so that they may overcome the power of evil and death. It must also challenge the arrogance of cultures which makes them believe their power is indestructible. God's powerlessness challenges human power. The power struggle is not between gospel and cultures, but between the gospel and the «powers» within any culture which dehumanize people.

How can the gospel help to eliminate the mutual exclusiveness of cultures? to challenge injustice and struggle against oppressive structures and values? The gospel in turn is challenged by the cultures in which it finds itself. A culture cannot become a criterion to judge gospel, yet a culture cannot accept any cultural pattern pertaining to the gospel that is not compatible with its own.

The Gospel: God's liberating presence: The gospel not only challenges and judges cultures; it shapes, purifies and transforms them, giving them a new identity. Today, humanity is exposed to evil and destructive forces that are manifested through cultures, with violence as the most characteristic feature. How can this culture of death be transformed into a culture of life? The gospel is a Gospel of Life, a reality made manifest in Jesus Christ. Through the life-affirming message of the Gospel, the churches should challenge the cultures of violence and death, and proclaim and celebrate the Gospel of Life.

The 1990 JPIC World Convocation called for a culture of active non-violence; a Programme to Overcome Violence has been established within the WCC structure. Combating violence means eradicating its root causes, reaffirming the sacredness of life, promoting justice and restoring human dignity. To overcome violence by non-violent action is now an ecumenical strategy.

The gospel should become incarnate in a particular culture – it must liberate people, not make them captives of culture. The gospel liberates cultures from their self-imprisonment; it also renews cultures. Christ did not bring a new culture but renewed and transformed the Jewish culture. With the coming of the gospel to Armenia, Armenian culture underwent a process of inner transformation. In the gospel, cultures are healed, restored to wholeness, and their integrity is recovered and affirmed.

The Gospel: A reconciling or a dividing factor? The gospel is a unifying factor in the midst of cultural diversities, but it may also become a divisive factor; a culture provides a basis for bringing people together but also a basis for exclusion. In cultures, particularities have become walls of division, but they have also become forces of self-protection and survival. In the gospel, the local and the global interact. The gospel helps people affirm their cultural identity, and enables them to transcend their cultures to become part of a global community. But can it really play an effective role in cultures where polarization and confrontation are found? The Moderator believed that the gospel as a unitive factor was of crucial importance in societies torn apart by tensions and contradictions.

The gospel is a manifestation of what we call «unity in diversity» and «diversity in unity». It is received and proclaimed within the diversity of cultures, and belonging to one gospel does not preclude belonging to different cultures. The gospel is also a healing reality, a making whole – which is another way of saying reconciliation: it brings together those who were separated, it is God's healing presence. The gospel is a call for a renewed relation with God and creation.

Christian Mission facing new Challenges: New perspectives and tasks are opening up for Christian mission in today's world in which boundaries have disappeared and humanity is moving towards one inter-dependent community. The Moderator spoke of the conviction that mission is not the church's «mandate» but God's «initiative» – mission belongs to God. Mission is not one of the functions of the church – it is its *raison d'être* by which the church becomes fully itself. Hence, mission pertains to the whole people of God; we have to think in terms of the one mission of the one church. Mission has become multi-dimensional, multi-directional, and multi-cultural. Therefore we need the kind of mission that is free from domination by the peculiarities of one culture. The church's mission is not only to proclaim the gospel but to live it, and to be a sign of the kingdom. We must develop an incarnational missiology.

In a world where small nations and ethnic minorities are trying to reaffirm their ethnic and cultural identities, how can the ecumenical movement help the churches to break out of their cultural captivity while remaining faithful to their cultural heritage and identity? A holistic approach to mission must take this dimension seriously.

A challenge for the ecumenical movement is to develop an ecumenical hermeneutic to enable churches to understand each other across cultural boundaries. The aim of the gospel is not to convert people to a culture but to proclaim Jesus Christ. The church is called to become an inclusive community, but this does not imply aiming for an inclusive culture.

In the past, mission was perceived as being exclusively the outgoing of the church. But now, without losing this global dimension, the churches should engage in missionary work at home, on the local level. The global missionary outreach becomes more credible if it is authenticated by a local missionary engagement.

Mission should enhance and orient the dialogue of cultures. But the tension between the gospel and cultures will never be resolved: the gospel will always challenge those aspects of culture that are not compatible with itself.

The role of the ecumenical movement is to re-orient cultures towards the kind of humanity/creation/God relationship portrayed in the gospel and given as a gift of God. The ecumenical vision remains more than ever *towards one Gospel in many cultures, towards one humanity in a reconciled diversity*.

In obedience to the gospel message, the role of the ecumenical movement is, first, to call the cultures to a quality of life that is manifested in its fullness through the gospel; second, to give wholeness, integrity and authenticity to cultures and converge them towards the crucified and risen Christ; and third, to help the churches speak and act together in the common language of the gospel by affirming life in the midst of the culture of death, peace in the midst of cultures of violence, justice in the midst of cultures of injustice, and Koinonia in the midst of cultures of conflict and division.

Discussion

Dr Patelos commented that culture, even if subject to other influences, is inspired by the gospel but is still a human conception. If we forget this we will transform culture into an idol, and that we must beware of. We must be discerning

in our criticism – not everything in Western cultures is to be condemned. Secondly, in dealing with the issue of «conflict of civilisations» it was the ecumenical task to underline the importance of particularities as opposed to uniformity: we must avoid being caught up in one uniform civilisation. This planet has no future unless cultures cooperate with each other instead of waging war.

What does contextualisation of the gospel mean for those coming from churches in the West? asked Dr Granberg-Michaelson. One of the greatest tensions today is the attempt to use the tools of a culture to reach people who have no experience of the church, often reducing worship to the level of entertainment. This creates divisions around the nature of the gospel. The issue of a criterion for judging culture had become pivotal, and he hoped it would be a focal point in the World Mission Conference – if a criterion could be found that would relate to churches in all cultures it would be a step forward for the ecumenical movement.

Mr Lodberg took up the same point, asking whether the West represented all that was negative while the East represented the positive? Was this a new way to dichotomise the world? Should we not rather talk of a fragmented world –fragmented churches and relationships between churches? Referring to the situation of the churches in Europe and the unholy identification between church, confession, people, state and land, he asked how can we live with pluralism within our own confessional context? The issue of a national church was under pressure, so how do we live in a theologically sound way with the understanding of a national church? And, while we speak of globalisation, we are also experiencing greater regionalisation, and even a nationalistic/confessional tendency among the churches. He felt the fragmentation was greater than was implied in the Moderator's paper.

Bishop Neill expressed concern about this global culture; it can be labelled as western – which to a large extent is true – but it is more than that. Are we to be entirely negative about the global youth culture that is growing up today? towards all that is happening through the communications industry and the challenge that brings? He felt the churches should not only be critical of modern materialistic culture but engage with it in a positive way.

Ms Kathindi spoke of the importance of affirming culture as a Christian. The older generation finds this difficult, but for her it helped to be able to affirm and keep space for her culture, otherwise she did not feel she had done justice to being a Christian and to grappling with what the gospel is all about.

Bishop Talbert spoke of the fact that in his area, the gospel is proclaimed in fourteen different languages on a Sunday. While this is exciting, it is also one of the most difficult challenges the church faces today. How can we prevent such indigenous expressions from becoming parochial, and how do we build bridges between cultures?

Dr Mandeng ma Mbeleg referred to Pope John Paul's visit to Yaoundé, suggesting that there be some mutual sharing of material. The Moderator's report could be shared with churches in Africa to help them see how African culture and the gospel can interact, while the Pope's address about the way the Roman Catholic Church has dealt with African culture could be inspirational for the Central Committee as well as for the World Mission Conference.

On the question of a culture of life over against a culture of death, Mr Rakoto felt that a personal relationship with Jesus Christ was the most important thing to be sought after. As to hidden ideologies, he wondered whether this was a problem of culture first of all, or whether it resulted from our use of the media. Was there not something in between?

Violence is the most destructive feature in contemporary cultures, said Bishop Zacharias, and we need to challenge cultures of violence and death. In thinking of the gospel versus culture, he asked whether Gospel was anti-culture or whether it fulfilled culture? Was the church in fact qualified to challenge the culture of violence, since much of the violence is to be found within the church? Gospel versus culture should be transformed by the gospel fulfilling the culture. Secondly, the gospel is a unifying basis for bringing people together, not for excluding them, though it is also true that cultures may bring unity among humanity. Who decides whether the gospel is transforming or transcending? What is important is not culture versus gospel, but the gospel permeating into the culture.

Dr Tveter appreciated the Moderator's point that Christ challenged his culture, and she felt that we should also challenge our cultures, even those within the church. There is a tendency to believe that the West has always had the gospel, but this was not the case: her church had recently celebrated one thousand years of Christianity; the Viking culture had been challenged at that point, and is still being challenged today.

Regarding the section on cultures in crisis, Ms Mwondha asked whether the Moderator was referring to contemporary cultures or other cultures; there were also traditional cultures. On the point that contemporary cultures are in deep crisis,

it seemed as if cultures had become entities that exist on their own. She felt that cultures do not stay in crisis but are expressed through the people. A culture cannot express itself except through the people – and these people form the churches which are part of the ecumenical movement, so we cannot dissociate ourselves from this.

Ms Nontawasee agreed on the need to return to the roots of a culture but this was not always as easy as it sounded. Thailand was predominantly Buddhist, with deep cultural foundations, and often the different cultures have become so mixed that it becomes difficult to go back to the roots.

Response by the Moderator

The Moderator expressed appreciation for the questions and observations, which meant that his intention to stimulate discussion had been successful. He pointed out that his paper was not a theological reflection but an articulation of an existential experience emerging from his own situation within the Armenian Church and in his part of the world. Secondly, there were certain questions with which he was constantly wrestling without reaching a clear conclusion; in fact, there were no clear answers to the questions we are facing in the area of Gospel and Cultures. He responded to some of the points made:

- The Moderator agreed that in our Christian understanding culture is a provisional reality, a framework through which we experience and express our faith. This was in contrast to the Muslim concept of culture which is not provisional; the divine revelation is manifested through the specific culture and that culture is a sacred and fixed reality. For the Christian understanding however, cultures are always provisional.
- He had no answer to the question of what could happen to the gospel when it is communicated through Western culture which is in moral decay: this was what he meant by saying that Western culture had become a global reality, no longer pertaining only to the West.
- Regarding an ecumenical culture, the Moderator stated that the ecumenical movement was the place where cultures are in dialogue, where they creatively inter-act. But, consciously or unconsciously, we have generated an ecumenical culture and are dominated by it. In order to have efficient communication we use ecumenical culture, or jargon, otherwise we are not understood – we have to accept this reality. In spite of this ecumenical culture, it is important to maintain and enhance our cultural diversities in the ecumenical movement.

But if he spoke about ecumenical culture in his own church, he would not be understood.

- It was difficult to draw a distinct line between Western and non-Western culture because cultures today are so much interwoven that there is no clear line of demarcation. This was part of the problem – Western culture as it becomes dominant is penetrating all cultures and is becoming a reality almost everywhere.
- How to live with pluralism was again an open question, and a major concern for those coming from a highly pluralistic society like that of Lebanon. There the expression «co-existence» is not used; they speak rather of «sharing the common life together» – that is their concern, their hope, their promise, and this could be a concrete example for other areas of the world.
- Responding to Bishop Zacharias' reference to «gospel versus culture», the Moderator asserted that this had not been his intention. He would not accept gospel and culture as being in contradiction; rather, they must be in interaction. He was trying to say that culture divides, but gospel unites. Jesus Christ challenges all cultures; all cultures are under God's judgement. All cultures are in crisis, not just those in the West.
- The Moderator agreed that going back to our roots was not an easy process; it implied conflict and could be a painful process, but at the same time it is a source of survival.

III. Response by the Central Committee

At a later session, Ms Gcabashe presented the report of the General Secretariat Committee, which had prepared the following response to these two reports:

The GS Committee welcomed the **Moderator's and General Secretary's reports**. They were particularly appreciative of the division between the two officers in reporting on the work of the Council (the General Secretary on his work and that of his colleagues, and the Moderator on the work of the Executive) and expressed the hope that this pattern would continue in the future.

The Committee was grateful to the **Moderator** for highlighting the significance of issues of Gospel and Culture.

*The GS Committee recommended, and the Central Committee **agreed**, that the Moderator's Report be referred to the commissions and staff of Units I and II.*

In particular it noted:

- a) The need to distinguish in all cultures that which needs to be affirmed and that which must be resisted, judging culture both positively and negatively;
- b) The Gospel cannot be identified with any particular culture and it cannot be communicated outside culture, especially if we hold on to a model of incarnation. This means that we need to pay attention to how culture changes and keep up to date with that;
- c) Churches in the rich North might need special help in discerning the good as opposed to the bad within their cultural context;
- d) The way in which the divisions of the churches create a culture that contradicts the Gospel;
- e) In the post Cold War period, a clash of cultures/religions/ideologies was promoted in many different parts of the world. Such conflict needed to be addressed by the WCC as a matter of urgency.

The Committee believed that the **General Secretary's Report** offered a profound analysis of the challenges facing the Council at the present time and

*The GS Committee recommended, and the Central Committee **agreed**, that the report be commended for study and action by those involved in the Common Understanding and Vision process, believing that it offers a visionary basis for future developments.*

In particular it noted:

- a) The need for the Council to take more realistic account of what were the actual concerns of the member churches. These could often be found in the agendas of NCCs, though it was equally true that member churches needed to be encouraged to allow themselves to be freed from their own histories to claim God's new future;
- b) Some drew attention to the way in which in certain countries NCCs had restructured themselves so that there was not an ecumenical agenda promoted by ecumenical enthusiasts but rather the ecumenical agenda became that which the churches were willing themselves to undertake in common partnership;

- c) As presently constituted, the churches were not structured to respond swiftly to the requests made by the WCC. The Council therefore needs to think about how better it can enter into conversation with the member churches and discover their hopes and ambitions and their evaluation of its programmes;
- d) The Council needs to consider how it can nurture in the churches the political will, or the willingness to deepen commitment, to take definitive action to promote unity in life and witness. This required *metanoia* in the present motivation of many churches;
- e) A preference was expressed for the second option (b) (mentioned on p. 21), which needed further study;
- f) Many believed that the churches needed the movements as more flexible, focused instruments, offering the churches a means of responding more swiftly to changed circumstances;
- g) If the goal of the Council was to promote visible unity within one eucharistic fellowship, there must be no drawing back from handling the hard issues of doctrine, which it was sometimes difficult to find on the agendas of some ecumenical meetings. If the Council was to move in new directions, it would be necessary to have a full theological rationale for such change;
- h) The achievements of the ecumenical movement in terms of the confidence and understanding that had been nurtured amongst the member churches needed to be affirmed: this achievement was undergirded by the direction given to the Council's work by the Basis and the Functions of the Council, as spelled out in the Constitution;
- j) Whilst the Council had done much to extend the boundaries of Christian thinking in many areas, the present Central Committee needed to take 'holy risks' in bold leadership decisions without too much thought for uncomfortable criticism from their home constituencies;
- k) The finite resources of the Council constantly emphasised the need for the setting of realistic priorities;
- l) To help the churches to respond to the new opportunities spelled out by the General Secretary in his paper, he was encouraged to think of producing a leaflet in popular style, spelling out the possibilities.

PUBLIC ISSUES

After explaining the procedures for Public Issues, the Moderator invited Dr Aaron Tolen, moderator of the Public Issues Committee (PIC) to introduce its first report. Three draft texts were submitted to Central Committee, and opportunity was offered for comments.

I. NUCLEAR TESTING

Mr Vailaau expressed appreciation for the draft, and for the earlier action of the General Secretary by his letter to President Chirac opposing the decision by the French Government to recommence nuclear testing in the Pacific. He urged the Central Committee to take some strong action in addition to making a statement.

Mr de Turckheim reported on action taken by the French churches, noting that not only the churches but a high percentage of French people in general opposed the tests. The NCC had passed on to government authorities the cries of indignation received from churches in the Pacific, especially from French Polynesia.

At a later session, Dr Tolen presented a revised draft which was **adopted** as follows:

STATEMENT ON NUCLEAR TESTING

The Central Committee of the World Council of Churches, meeting in Geneva, 14-22 September 1995,

Recalling the conviction expressed by the WCC Sixth Assembly (Vancouver, 1983) «that the time has come when the churches must unequivocally declare that the production and deployment as well as the use of nuclear weapons are a crime against humanity and that such activities must be condemned on ethical and theological grounds»;

Convinced that the logic and practice of nuclear deterrence has no place in God's design for a peaceful world and the integrity of the Creation;

Welcoming the agreement of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference to extend indefinitely the NPT regime and to conclude a Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty at an early date;

Welcoming the declaration of some nuclear weapons states that they will continue to respect a moratorium on nuclear testing until such time as the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty is agreed;

Condemns the decision of the People's Republic of China to continue nuclear testing after all other nuclear powers had unilaterally declared a moratorium on such testing and after the decision to extend the nuclear non-proliferation regime;

Calls insistently on the Government of the People's Republic of China to desist from any further nuclear testing and to declare publicly its intention to join the moratorium announced by other nuclear-weapons states;

Condemns the decision of the Government of France to end the moratorium declared by the previous government, and to proceed to detonate a nuclear device on Moruroa Atoll, far from the shores of Metropolitan France, without consultation with the Territorial Assembly of French Polynesia where the experiment was conducted, and in defiance of world-wide official and popular protests, including those made by the Pacific Conference of Churches and the Evangelical Church of French Polynesia and the Council of Christian Churches in France;

Calls insistently on the President of France to reverse his decision without delay, to desist from any further nuclear testing, and to announce publicly his Government's intention to renew its moratorium through the adoption of a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.

Calls upon member churches to press on their governments, or to support their continuing efforts to demand a universal moratorium on all further nuclear testing

Bishop Gomez, moderator of Unit IV Committee, said that the issue of renewed nuclear testing had been discussed, and it was decided to invite members of Central Committee to join a public act of demonstration on 21 September, walking to the Palais des Nations. This was felt to be a practical way of showing solidarity, and was timed to coincide with the interview that Pastor Jacques Ihorai, President of the Evangelical Church of French Polynesia, and his delegation were to have with President Chirac in Paris.

Pastor Ihorai was then invited to address the Central Committee. He reported on some of the actions taken in the Pacific region after it was learned, with great sadness, that President Chirac had decided to recommence nuclear testing. The Pacific people had been convinced that the moratorium decided on in 1990 by President Mitterand was the beginning of an era of building up a world of peace and justice free from such threats. But this would only be possible once testing came to an end and nuclear weapons were dismantled.

A day of fasting had been held in Tahiti and various efforts made to urge the French President to reverse his decision, and he was grateful for the messages of support they had received from all parts of the world. He referred also to the violence which followed the first test, especially in Papeete. It was one thing to rebuild damaged buildings, but it would be difficult to rebuild the confidence of the people of the region. It was important for the French government to recognise that they share responsibility for this explosion of violence.

He again expressed thanks to members of Central Committee who continued to support the peaceful struggle of those in the Pacific region, and for their solidarity in agreeing to make a public demonstration at the time of the interview of his delegation with President Chirac.

On Thursday 21 September, members of Central Committee and staff proceeded in procession to the Place des Nations in an act of peaceful protest; the Officers presented an appeal to Mr Vladimir Petrovsky, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations in Geneva for transmittal to the Secretary-General.

II. STATUS OF JERUSALEM

Dr Blei questioned the use of the term «holy places», to which Dr Tolen responded that this appeared in the quotation from earlier WCC statements. The present text was intended to update the WCC's position on this difficult issue, as requested by the churches at the time of the general secretary's visit earlier in the year.

At a later session, Dr Tolen presented a revised text. In response to a question from Prof. Patelos with regard to diplomatic initiatives being taken by the Vatican in relation to Jerusalem, the General Secretary reported on his conversation with the Vatican representative to the State of Israel during his visit in May 1995. There is full awareness in the Vatican that they cannot negotiate on behalf of

all Christians, nor on behalf of the local churches in Jerusalem. However, the Vatican does intend to ensure that any agreement reached on diplomatic level will apply to all Christian churches in Jerusalem.

Bishop Bue referred to the fact that the State of Israel was preparing in 1997 a Holy Year for Jerusalem, and expressed concern that this would make it even more difficult for the aims of this statement to be achieved.

Metropolitan Chrysostomos felt that the Orthodox concern should be stated also, and he mentioned several points in the draft where he did not find the terminology acceptable. Dr Tolen explained that these points were quoted from earlier statements by the WCC and therefore could not be changed.

With one abstention, the Central Committee **adopted** the statement as follows:

STATEMENT ON THE STATUS OF JERUSALEM

In previous WCC statements on Jerusalem, quoted below, the World Council of Churches has affirmed that:

1. Jerusalem is a holy city for three monotheistic religions: Judaism, Christianity and Islam. (Central Committee, Berlin/West, 1974). It is therefore their responsibility to cooperate in the creation of conditions that will ensure that Jerusalem is a city open to the adherents of all three religions, where they can meet and live together. The tendency to minimize Jerusalem's importance for any of these three religions should be avoided. (Fifth Assembly, Nairobi, 1975).
2. Christian Holy Places in Jerusalem and neighbouring areas belong to the greatest extent to member churches of the World Council of Churches, specifically to the Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox Churches... Any proposed solution as to the future of the holy places in Jerusalem should take into account the legitimate rights of the churches most directly concerned. (Central Committee, 1974).
3. (The) question of Jerusalem is not only a matter of protection of the holy places, it is organically linked with living faiths and communities of people in the holy city. (It) is essential that the holy shrines should not become mere monuments of visitation, but should serve as living places of worship integrated and responsive to Christian communities who continue

to maintain their life and roots within the holy city, and for those who, out of religious attachment, want to visit them. (Fifth Assembly).

4. The special legislation regulating the relationship of the Christian communities and the authorities, guaranteed by international treaties (Paris 1856 and Berlin 1878) and the League of Nations and known as the status quo of the Holy Places must be fully safeguarded and confirmed in any agreement concerning Jerusalem. (Fifth Assembly).
5. (The) settlement of the interreligious problems of the holy places should take place under an international aegis and guarantee which ought to be respected by the parties concerned as well as the ruling authorities; (and) should be worked out with the most directly concerned member churches, as well as with the Roman Catholic Church. These issues should also become subjects for dialogue with Jewish and Muslim counterparts. (Fifth Assembly).
6. (The) future status of Jerusalem... has to be determined within the general context of the settlement of the Middle East conflict in its totality. (Fifth Assembly).
7. (Just) as the future status of Jerusalem has been considered part of the destiny of the Jewish people, so it cannot be considered in isolation from the destiny of the Palestinian people...(Central Committee, Geneva, 1980).

Against this background, and in the light of the deep religious, historical and emotional attachments of Christians, Jews and Muslims to Jerusalem and the turmoil to which this gives rise; and recognising the significance of Jerusalem to the continuing Middle East peace process, the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches, meeting in Geneva, 14-22 September 1995,

Welcomes the visit to Jerusalem by the General Secretary (15-21 May 1995), during which he met with the heads of Churches and Christian Communities in Jerusalem, with the Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Israel, the President of the Palestinian National Authority, and others;

Welcomes especially the joint Memorandum of the Heads of Christian Communities in Jerusalem on the Significance of Jerusalem for Christians, in which they call on all parties «to go beyond exclusivist visions or actions, and without discrimination, to consider the religious and national aspirations of others, in order to give back to Jerusalem its true universal character and to make of the city a holy place of reconciliation for humankind»;

Notes with appreciation their appeal for full respect of the rights of believers to freedom of access to holy places, of movement within the Holy City, and to carry out pilgrimages in the spirit of authentic tradition; the rights of local Christian Communities to freedom of worship and of conscience, both as individuals and as religious communities, to carry out their religious, educational, medical and other duties of charity, and to have their own institutions and their own personnel to run them;

Endorses their affirmation that, in claiming these rights for themselves, Christians recognize and respect similar and parallel rights of Jewish and Muslim believers and their communities, and declare themselves disposed to search with Jews and Muslims for a mutually respectful application of these rights and for a harmonious coexistence in the perspective of the universal spiritual vocation of Jerusalem;

Endorses their call

- «for a special judicial and political statute for Jerusalem which reflects the universal importance and significance of the city;
- «that, in order to satisfy the national aspirations of all its inhabitants, and in order that Jews, Christians and Muslims can be ‘at home’ in Jerusalem and at peace with one another, representatives from the three monotheistic religions, in addition to local political powers, ought to be associated in the elaboration and application of such a special statute;
- «that, because of the universal significance of Jerusalem, the international community ought to be engaged in the stability and permanence of this statute and provide the necessary guarantees in order that Jerusalem not be dependent solely on municipal or national political authorities, whoever they may be, that Jerusalem not be victimized by laws imposed as a result of hostilities or wars, but to be an open city which transcends local, regional or world political troubles.»

Reiterates its statement of August 1980 opposing the Israeli unilateral action of annexing East Jerusalem and uniting the city as its «eternal capital» under its exclusive sovereignty in contradiction of pertinent United Nations resolutions;

Expresses profound concern about the policies of the State of Israel which have created a situation of political and economic insecurity for the indigenous Christian population of Jerusalem which has contributed to a process of emigration which continuously diminishes the Christian presence in Jerusalem;

Appeals once again to the State of Israel to desist from its continuing, systematic policies of confiscation of buildings and land, destruction of buildings, establishment of new Jewish settlements in and around East Jerusalem, discrimination in the granting of building permits, constraints on the freedom of movement for Arab Christians and Muslims, as well as for indigenous Christians within and access to Jerusalem and the Holy Places, and from all attempts to alter the demographic status quo of the Holy City prior to the conclusion of agreements with regard to its future status;

Calls upon the Government of Israel and on the Palestinian National Authority to take up soon the question of the future status of Jerusalem in their negotiations, given its centrality to the ultimate success of efforts to implement the Accords and to promote peace in and beyond the Middle East region; and

Appeals to member churches to be constant in prayer and in acts of solidarity with the Christian communities in Jerusalem in order to ensure a continuing, vital Christian presence in the Holy City and to strengthen the historic role of these communities and their leaders in promoting open communication, dialogue and cooperation among all communities in the Holy City.

III. MESSAGE ON THE CONFLICT IN THE FORMER YUGOSLAVIA

Mr Rüegger spoke of the concern felt in the Swiss churches with regard to the human rights violations committed on both sides of this conflict. One of the problems was the fact that the Serbian Orthodox Church, with which they had been in a good relationship in the past, protested when Serb people were victims but was reluctant to speak up against the Bosnian Serbs when they committed crimes against their Croatian neighbours. Churches have an obligation to be critical of such acts regardless of who has committed them.

Bishop Engelhardt said many questions were being raised in churches in Germany as to what the churches and the ecumenical movement was doing, and he felt that more information should be provided on what has in fact been done in terms of visits and meetings.

Bishop Lavrentije felt that many misunderstandings arose because of the insufficient information about the real situation in Bosnia. Information has come from the Muslim side and from the Croatian side, while the Serbs are under sanctions and had less opportunity to communicate their position. He welcomed what the WCC had done in facilitating dialogue between the different churches.

At a later session, Dr Tolen presented a revised draft.

Dr Rüegger referred to a paragraph in the document which said that the widening gap among Christians had to do with the «*differing..attitudes to war and peace... and whether violence can be justified as a last resort in pursuit of peace*». He felt this was misleading because, as far as he was aware, most churches within the WCC would agree that

- the use of military force should be avoided as long as possible,
- political dialogue should always be the primary means of conflict resolution,
- military actions can only be a last resort when all else has failed.

In his view, what had caused a widening gap within the ecumenical fellowship was the question as to how churches should react when their political and military leaders wage war to pursue nationalistic goals, when they systematically torture people and pursue a policy of ethnic cleansing, and so on. That was the issue which had caused controversy amongst us. He therefore suggested amending this sentence as follows: *...have contributed to a widening gap between WCC member churches.*, deleting the rest of the sentence.

The amendment was lost by 46 votes to 23, with 4 abstentions.

Mr Huttenga was grateful that Bishop Lavrentije had shown that there was more than one point of view within the Serbian Orthodox Church (SOC). We cannot deny that inhuman violence has been perpetrated on both sides of the conflict in the former Yugoslavia. As co-members of the WCC, we have a special relationship with the SOC, but the churches he represented could not agree with the attitude of the SOC; it was difficult to understand why the SOC did not distance herself more clearly from the nationalism, the racism, the ethnic cleansing that are taking place. At the same time, mutual accountability meant a dialogue with the SOC. He felt there should be more emphasis on the call to a rejection of nationalism. Maybe the media had been giving too simplistic a view of the situation, but the first responsibility for the image of the churches was the churches themselves.

Bishop Neill proposed an additional phrase and a re-ordering of wording: *..to desist from further bombing and missile attacks, and once peace has been achieved, to help reconstruct ravaged cities, towns and rural areas.*

Dr Tolen said the PIC had discussed whether to include condemnation of specific actions but had decided to group a number of points together. In

isolating this point there would be the danger that we address only one dimension of the widespread use of force.

The amendment was lost by 34 votes to 33, with 10 abstentions.

Metr. Athanasios felt that mention should be made about the destruction of many religious monuments in the course of the fighting. However it was pointed out that this has been mentioned in the past, and the Committee did not accept this proposal.

With some further agreed amendments in wording, the Central Committee **adopted** the Message on the Former Yugoslavia as follows:

MESSAGE ON THE CONFLICT IN THE FORMER YUGOSLAVIA

The World Council of Churches has issued repeated appeals to the parties to the conflict in the former Yugoslavia and to external powers involved, urging them to renounce the use of armed force as a means of achieving political goals.

It has called upon all parties to pursue a cease-fire and an ultimate settlement of the conflict through negotiations. It has underscored the centrality of the UN and European negotiators operating in the context of the Conference on the Former Yugoslavia under the authority of the UN Security Council, and urged members of the Contact Group to maintain a common approach in support of these negotiations.

The WCC, working closely together with the Conference of European Churches (CEC) and the Council of European Bishops' Conferences (CCEE), has both challenged and sought to accompany the churches caught up in the conflict, through regular contact, frequent visits, the convening of meetings which brought their leaders together for dialogue – sometimes with their Muslim counterparts in Bosnia – and provided opportunities for face-to-face dialogue between them and churches outside.

Meanwhile, the intransigence of political leaders and military commanders on the ground, the employment of new, ever more destructive weapons, and the unabated flow of sophisticated heavy arms into the zone of conflict; massive military invasions, the shelling of cities, and bombings by foreign air and missile forces have contributed to a reprehensible escalation of the

cycle of violence which inflicts terrible suffering on civilian populations throughout Bosnia-Herzegovina. Christians must condemn this escalating violence in the name of Christ, the Prince of Peace.

The current negotiations undertaken by the United States of America, in consultation with other members of the Contact Group, have achieved significant agreements among the leaders of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Republic of Croatia, and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia – also representing the Bosnian Serbs – and with respect to the differences between Greece and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The Basic Principles recently given consensual agreement by the foreign ministers of the first three have momentarily broken an impasse in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and are welcome.

We hope that they will lead to a peace established on the basis of certain fundamental principles: Every eventual state or «entity» must provide constitutional guarantees for minorities, both individuals and communities, living within its borders. Multi-cultural and multi-ethnic formations must be encouraged and respected within every society. All must develop a pluralist vision of the future both within their own borders and with their neighbours.

The churches and other religious communities of the world continue to bear a major responsibility for the promotion of such a peace. Yet we confess that our own lack of faithfulness, clarity and unity have impaired our ability to work for peace.

The churches of the former Yugoslavia cannot control the military powers, but some do have influence in their respective societies. The narrowly nationalist tone and content of positions taken by some church leaders, however, have increased tensions between the communities and given rise to controversy in the wider ecumenical fellowship. This fact, and the impact of the seemingly uncontrollable, rising spiral of human suffering on the conscience of churches outside the immediate conflict have contributed to a widening gap between differing Christian attitudes to war and peace, the use of sanctions, and whether violence can be justified as a last resort in pursuit of peace.

Fundamental ecumenical concerns are at stake. What does mutual accountability require in such a situation? What balance is to be struck between the duty of churches to challenge one another with regard to what

the Gospel requires and our mutual responsibility for one another in the ecumenical fellowship? What is the role of confession, repentance and forgiveness in ecumenical relations? What is the proper relationship between church, state, nation and people? Can differing perceptions of history be reconciled? How can churches give witness to the power of the reconciling act of Christ on the Cross by helping one another to escape the bonds of history?

There is a clear need for continued, broadened and deepened dialogue among the churches on all these difficult theological, ecclesiological and ecumenical issues, both through the ecumenical bodies and in bilateral conversations between member churches for the sake of the credibility of the churches' witness for peace. Wherever possible, this dialogue should extend to other churches and Muslim counterparts in order to continue to build bridges of understanding.

The witness of the churches in this tragic situation is not limited to the official positions taken by church leaders. It is also to be found in the efforts of local ecumenical, interfaith, and often multi-ethnic groups who keep alive hope for peace and reconciliation throughout the area of conflict and beyond. It is imperative for the wider ecumenical fellowship to recognize the authenticity, courage and value of that witness; to support actively such groups and to provide information about their work to an anxious world.

There is a role for all churches to play in promoting peace in the former Yugoslavia. All together must denounce unequivocally the inhuman practice of «ethnic cleansing» and the use of armed force and acts of violence by every side. Each church should be particularly vigilant about injustice and violence caused by political, military and economic forces in its own society. Churches in countries outside the area of conflict must engage actively in efforts to stem the flourishing private and government sponsored commerce in and transfer of arms to the warring parties; to offer solidarity through the continuing provision of humanitarian assistance and support for the charitable work of churches ministering to the victims; and to promote a broad international commitment to help reconstruct ravaged cities, towns and rural areas once peace has been achieved.

Regrettably, the major international media have not always conveyed the complexity of the situation in the former Yugoslavia. Thus, while failures and alleged acts of complicity with the forces of war are widely reported,

the stories of sacrificial and bold Christian and Muslim witness to reconciliation and peace, which also abound, are not reported and remain largely unknown. We remain convinced that, through dialogue, and especially through encouragement of Christians and others caught in this tragedy, and by God's grace, an end to suffering and new vision for the future are within reach.

To this end, in God's name, we appeal again insistently and with a sense of great urgency to the leaders of the churches and of other religions in the former Yugoslavia, and to all political and military parties to the conflict to spare no effort to stop the fighting, to bring an end to this war, and to work together for reconciliation, to heal the deep wounds of history and of this present conflict, and to transform the climate of hatred and violence.

We commit ourselves to assist them, to the best of our abilities, as they assume the challenge of rebuilding new, just societies capable of living together in peace and mutual respect.

IV. INTERIM REPORT ON UN WOMEN'S CONFERENCE, BEIJING

Dr Janice Love, as leader of the WCC delegation, was invited to give an initial report on WCC participation at the NGO Forum, 30 August – 8 September, and at the Fourth United Nations World Conference on Women, 4-15 September, in Beijing, just prior to this meeting of Central Committee.

About seventy women related to WCC participated in the NGO Forum and many were involved in the organisation of six workshops. These were of a high quality and were well received; they became a meeting point for women to meet each other and the WCC and participate in a truly multi-faceted discussion.

The China Christian Council had provided a great deal of backing and support to the WCC participants and there was good opportunity for both formal and informal contact with Christian women related to the CCC Women's Commission, the YWCA, among others. WCC participants also worshipped at the local church on Sunday with many other women attending the Conference, and were invited to a dinner hosted by the deputy director of the Religious Affairs Department of the Government of China.

During the World Conference itself, WCC participation included the setting up of three ecumenical gatherings for exchange of information on concerns of mutual interest and opportunity to strategise around issues relating to the Declaration put out by the Conference. The WCC had developed an intervention beforehand, and it was encouraging that 18 other ecumenical bodies present endorsed this. Unfortunately it was not possible to present the statement in plenary – it had to be communicated in writing.

Governments adopted a Declaration and a platform of action that breaks new ground in several areas of great importance to women, including new standards in human rights for women, and focusing particular attention on violence against women. The Conference fell short of adequately reflecting the economic injustice that women face, that migrant women encounter, women under racism, and women's contribution to building a world of peace with justice.

One accomplishment of the gathering was the confirmation that women across the world are in the struggle together. Women across the world are beginning to learn that their diversity is a source of strength, and by building community together they can articulate common priorities. There is also opportunity to share ideas, perspectives, experiences, questions, and models of change that have been shown to be effective.

Finally, Dr Love highlighted the demonstration of perseverance of women to overcome whatever obstacles confront them as they try to build a better world. Together women are strong and growing stronger; they will keep moving forward. Through the Decade the WCC is part of this forward movement.

DELIBERATIVE SESSIONS

I. MISSION

Prof. Anna Marie Aagaard, presiding introduced the session by stating that the word **Mission** reflected a renewed determination within the WCC's constituency to proclaim Christ in word and deed to those who have not heard the gospel, and to those who have forgotten it and prefer to turn to other gods. Lifting up the term **Mission** also pointed to an awareness that so many people were prevented from hearing the invitation to worship the God of Jesus Christ because they were surrounded by the noise of war and violence, and by divided churches.

The WCC Constitution states that membership in this fellowship of churches includes an obligation to foster renewal of the churches in mission, and to facilitate the common witness of the churches in each place and in all places. To put it simply, Mission is not just an option – it is an obligation.

The Conference on World Mission and Evangelism (CWME) was to be held in Brazil in November/December 1996 under the theme *Called to One Hope: The Gospel in diverse Cultures*, when a new ecumenical statement on Mission and Evangelism would be worked on for approval by the WCC Assembly in Harare. This session was an opportunity for Central Committee members to contribute to the deliberations.

Prof. Aagaard voiced the hope that mission may make a difference to the lives of some men and women, helping them to see the world differently – as God's creation – and to live their lives differently – as Christ's disciples. But we cannot force others to submit to the transforming presence of God's Holy Spirit. The most frightening feature of the mission context today was that the contexts of violence, strife and division had become part of the text, so we must become a counter to the violence by living and embodying faith in the Giver of Life.

There followed a presentation of slides entitled *Life in all its Fullness – Contexts and Challenges for Mission Today*. It began with a tale of destruction and developed into stories of people who have refused to give in to the powers, who

have entered into the experience of living as risk-sharing communities; where small seeds of hope have begun to grow. In the midst of the brokenness there were helping hands, those who seek to affirm life, to share with each other. We are accountable to God.. people must care for one another.. all have their place.. gathered as a celebrating eucharistic community.. sent out to be living witnesses strengthened by the eucharist.. to pass on the light, to foster a witnessing caring community – a community of the cross, living letters of Christ, so that all may have life, and have it abundantly.

Next came three testimonies, the first by **Rev. Hector Mendez** from Cuba, who recalled preaching a sermon on Good Friday in the Presbyterian Reformed Church in Havana where he is pastor. For the first time in 35 years the church was crowded, with many young people who had never before been to church in Holy Week. It was an emotional occasion. One of those who came had previously been a youth leader, but with the Revolution and government pressures, he had decided not to come to church any more – and that was 35 years ago. Now, in deep repentance, he had come back! And others were returning to God's ways after long years away.

The current debate was on what our mission is now. We see it as coming through Hope: we must link the Christian faith with hope in life. Today people were coming to church to seek something to help restore their lives. Our theological reflection came out of the tears shed during the times when hope was lost. So today's mission in Cuba was to recover Hope; to give back hope in Christ to all who want it; to seek God with the joy of hope.

Dr Nenevi Seddoh, from Togo, recounted a conversation between a grandmother and her granddaughter, Fifi, who asked why their village was called «Tove Mission». Grandmother explained that originally the village was simply called Tove, and the people knew only about their traditional religion which existed alongside their culture. The 19th century was a turning point for Africa, with the arrival of explorers and traders from Europe, bringing so-called civilisation to Africa. There was also a desire to pass on the gospel by spreading the Christian faith among the peoples of Africa. The first missionaries came from Bremen and settled in Tove – so the village became known as Tove Mission.

Fifi then wanted to know whether we could still speak of mission today or was the mission era past? Grandmother replied that much had changed but missionaries continued their tradition of preaching the gospel, and she reminded Fifi of what

she had learned in Sunday School. Today we are disciples, and Jesus Christ sends us to be missionaries. Mission is God's work and he works through people. The mission of God is our mission, proclaiming the Kingdom of God, of life and hope.

How could this go in the midst of the difficult situation people find themselves in today? asked Fifi. In our rapidly changing world, said grandmother, with the problems and challenges facing Africa, mission is important and urgent; there are destructive forces around us, there is famine and poverty – seemingly endless problems – so we need a new vision of mission: the whole gospel for the whole human being in all our churches. We are co-workers with God, in our own lives, in our families, in our work places and wherever we go.

The third testimony was by **Dr Georges Tssetsis** who described himself as being deeply rooted in the Eastern tradition but living in the Western world, in the midst of the ecumenical movement. It was often said that Mission was God's work in our lives, that it belonged to the nature of the church, and that the proclamation of the gospel lay at the heart of the churches' vocation in the world. The Church everywhere, he asserted, is and must be in a missionary situation. The gospel is to be spread by Christ's disciples to the ends of the earth and to the end of time.

The early church had to face syncretism and different religious viewpoints; today a pluralistic world brings Christianity not only into dialogue with other faiths, but into confrontation with many ideological trends. Hence the Church must speak a language that is understood by those who receive the truth of the gospel.

Seeing what was happening in western societies, Dr Tssetsis concluded that churches had the task above all of bearing witness in their own societies, seeking to convert those among whom they are called to preach the gospel. But the mission of the church was not as simple as that. Selfish economic and political ends were features of contemporary civilization which lead to loss of human contact and human warmth. In this context, the mission of the church meant showing that our witness concerns every aspect of human life, demonstrating that the separation of the sacred and the secular is unthinkable in the spirit of the gospel. Only by keeping these inter-connected would it be possible for each church and Christian community to demonstrate that the ultimate goal of its mission is to become an authentic sign of the Kingdom of God.

Participants were then invited to move into groups, while three listeners took note of some of the discussion areas being touched on. They later reported back to the plenary:

Dr Mac Charles Jones heard the question of fundamentals being raised: how can the church help people deal with the complexity of life while not giving in to the simplistic answers usually associated with fundamentalism. What alternative vision does the gospel offer that allows people to live in community without being consumed by materialism?

Dr Larsson wondered whether we can still use the word «mission», or whether the burden of mission history and its links to imperialism/colonialism meant that it carried the wrong message for today? Events in Eastern and Central Europe today were a repetition of mission history in terms of not listening to the people living in a particular place and accepting the fact that churches already exist there. Mission is a mutual endeavour, but perhaps some new vocabulary was needed.

Dr Page heard several references to the issue of whether mission was a spiritual matter only, and whether it should be entirely separated from social needs. Was there a way of transcending dichotomies between spiritual ministries and social action? Mission was a calling for all of us whether we accept it or not – it is not a matter of choice. Mission today should be more visual and less verbal. Even if new churches were being established in parts of the developing world, they were not necessarily taking root: mission must not stop once a church is founded.

Discussion

For Dr Santana, part of the mission of the church was to help people see life as a whole. There was a tendency to think of the unity of the church as a goal in itself, but it also had to do with the unity of people. Today people were divided by other issues too, such as racism – a living force in many situations. The unity of people was vital so that we can move towards a society in which the will of God can be expressed, so that all may have life in abundance. This was part of the quest for unity, and she saw it as one of the contributions that mission could make to bringing people closer together.

Coming from a country where a high percentage of people belong to independent African religions, where 25% of the population is Muslim and 30% is Christian (mostly Protestant), Dr Tolen saw mission in terms of what does it mean to be

a Christian today? When we go out in mission to call people to Jesus Christ, they often find it difficult to accept us because of our divisions, so what does it mean when we call people to be Christians? Is there a difference between those who are Christians and those who are not?

According to Bishop Bue, mission work must be done in cooperation with and as part of the witness of the local church. Our motivation for mission was biblical: without mission the church would die. We need a renewed vision of being the body of Christ today, a realisation that as the body of Christ we are his presence in the world, doing his work. Our mission was to make God in Jesus Christ known to the world. We cannot save the world, but God can. No one could give a complete picture of Christ, but everything we do should contribute towards making the picture more complete. In order to get on with our task of mission, we must seek unity; mission was costly and we must be willing to pay the price. «The whole gospel to the whole world» – we must proclaim Jesus Christ with urgency, with unity, and with sacrifice.

Ms Davies-Izard pointed out that mission must also be seen as relating to people at local level, not simply as something that happens overseas in a different cultural setting. Secondly, the church tended to linger behind in the area of communication technology, but it must adapt to modern day media, otherwise its message would not be heard. If we were serious about spreading the gospel, we have to look at new ways of working, of using biblical material; many people today were not used to listening to a sermon, for example.

Mission was a very complex issue, said Archbishop Bozabalian, and history had shown that missions were not always successful. Mission had two dimensions: the first was in the church itself, while the second came out of the church to enlighten those who are in darkness. In the Middle East region, there had formerly been many Christians, but today these had decreased considerably. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, growing numbers of mission workers and sects had come to preach in the name of Jesus Christ, but instead of helping the local communities they were establishing new entities, different communities.

Bishop Gomez spoke of the many people today who profess to proclaim the good news but who in fact present a false, one-sided understanding showing little respect for inherited traditions. In preparing a new affirmation on mission and evangelism we must be careful to present the truth, avoiding a simplistic type of presentation. And our efforts in mission and evangelism must try to bridge the gap between what people who claim to be Christians do on Sundays and how they behave

during the rest of the week. The Caribbean people have to endure not only the power of racism but a series of devastating new forces – market forces, globalisation, false images of life conveyed through television – which attack local cultures and impede progress. Many young people today are alienated from the church because of these outside forces. How do we establish a unity of purpose and ecumenism amid the multiplicity of churches that flourish in the region?

Dr Lois Wilson wanted to hear the conviction that we must embrace mission where we live, not only elsewhere. The gospel, as well as the gospel and cultures debate, had profound implications for women, as for the church. The findings of the Decade visits had not been too encouraging in this area. Several church leaders still questioned the definition of violence, but many perpetrators of violence were to be found among the clergy. Some church leaders had joined in discussions with team members on issues of gospel and mission, but others had not. It was not simply a question of appointing more women to committees; the emphasis must be on the implications of the gospel for women who could contribute so much more if they were not so marginalised.

Bishop Szarek felt that many problems in Europe today stemmed from the separation that had taken place between diaconia and evangelism/witness; yet the Bible showed that witness was linked to diaconal action. How can we witness to Christ if we do not talk about him and his liberating message? Secondly he referred to the contradictory situation in Poland where legislation was preventing activities of some of the new churches, while authorising those of the historic churches. We have to recognise our situations and formulate models for evangelism and mission in our own contexts.

In Baptist understanding, mission and evangelism were the responsibility of every local congregation, said Mr Briggs. But they needed help to discover a language to ensure that the proclamation of the gospel was heard and understood by those not accustomed to «church language». How do we find the bridging points to make the gospel relevant in the situation to which we are bringing it? How do we ensure that our lifestyle affirms our message rather than contradicting it?

Dr Granberg-Michaelson described today's changing context: cross-cultural issues were no longer associated only with world mission, but had to be faced in local situations also, while the younger generation had a culture of its own. Secondly, mission was becoming decentralised rather than centralised, congregational rather than denominational. The ecumenical movement cannot

ignore this reality, and must ask what new opportunities are offered for new ways of cooperation and new structures of accountability. The integration of evangelism with action that meets the injustices in our midst was a model increasingly being embraced by many of the mainline churches. A new convergence was affirming that discipleship and Christian community, and the invitation to follow Christ, were also part of the involvement of the Christian community in the midst of injustice. Overcoming that dichotomy was a challenge both for the churches and for the ecumenical movement.

For Ms Welch, the relationship between mission and unity first became real when she was in South Africa, and she reiterated the importance of the unity question. Divided churches cost lives, so mission and unity have to belong together. When we are divided as churches we are not witnessing to the reconciling power of Christ. Secondly, there must be a certain emphasis on personal renewal in faith as part of our commitment to mission, which is engaging both with the personal and with the issues facing our complex human community. Referring to the recent 200th anniversary celebrations of the Council for World Mission (formerly the London Missionary Society), Ms Welch pointed to the changes that had taken place over this period which had led to a new sense of partnership that we can enjoy with those of different traditions across the world, so that together we are giving and receiving and sharing with one another for the greater glory of God.

Metr. Chrysostomos spoke of the difference in attitude towards mission between churches in the West and those in the East. In the latter, mission was seen more as a spiritual process. He felt the WCC had not progressed far in this regard; it may have condemned proselytism, but some member churches were engaging in proselytism against Orthodox churches. There have long been doctrinal and ecclesiological differences between West and East, and today there were differences too between religious freedom and freedom of conscience. There was exploitation of the weakness and poverty of those in countries where unemployment was high; many in Europe and North America found it difficult to accept the confessional unity, the religious integrity of a nation. That kind of mission resulted in division, undermining the existing local church.

Mr Lodberg mentioned that one of Europe's problems was the existence of those churches that carry such a burden of tradition that some people do not wish to belong to them. How could Europeans learn to accept the necessity for pluralism among churches in a local situation? that churches other than the traditional ones can fulfil the mission of God in a particular local context? We have to see this

understanding of mission and unity in a more holistic sense, and he felt that the church as a polycentric centre was a major challenge for us today.

Concluding the session, Ms Langerak invited participants to write down their personal reflections in response to two questions:

- 1) *What is the most burning mission challenge for my church, for my region?*
- 2) *In relation to that concern, what is the church's mission?*

Responses would be taken up by staff as they prepare for the World Mission Conference and the new statement on mission and evangelism.

Prof. Aagaard expressed appreciation to all who had participated in the session and in the preparations for it.

II. UPROOTED PEOPLE

Rev. Eunice Santana, presiding, introduced the session by speaking of her own experience as an uprooted person; she was grateful that she had been able to return to her country and put down new roots.

Central Committee was reminded that, at its meeting in Johannesburg in January 1994 it had asked for a policy statement on uprooted people, with input from the regions and the churches. A comprehensive draft context document, «*Promoting Sustainable Communities and Human Dignity with Uprooted People*»³ had been prepared by Unit IV after wide consultation with the member churches; this, together with the draft Policy Statement (Appendix IV) – *A Moment to Choose: Risking to be with Uprooted People* – had been shared with Central Committee.

The present session offered opportunity for discussion by Central Committee; the draft policy statement would then be referred to Unit IV Committee for revision; in the context of the Unit IV Committee report (see p. 172ff), Central Committee would be asked to adopt and commend it to the churches for action.

³ Comments on this context document may be forwarded to Unit IV staff; it will then be revised and published as a reference guide.

The presentation began with a video entitled «Hard Questions», showing faces of people in every region who have been uprooted because of violence and economic desperation, and asking those who were watching how they would respond.

Three of the five members of the International Reference Group set up to advise those working on the drafting, were then invited to present the document: Bishop Tilewa Johnson of The Gambia, Interim Chairperson of the AACC Refugee and Emergencies Committee, Ms Aline Papazian, director of the Life and Service Unit of the MECC, Lebanon, and Dr Elizabeth Ferris, director of Church World Service Immigration and Refugee Programme, USA.

Bishop Tilewa described the process that had taken place, noting that 73 member churches had responded to the general secretary's request for input. Ms Papazian pointed out that work with uprooted people was about individual human stories – stories that transcend differences in our political realities. In spite of the apparent differences among the various regions, there was a realisation that similar questions arise: are we on the side of the uprooted? Do we see the strangers among us? What do we say? What do we do?

Ms Papazian gave her own testimony as a granddaughter of survivors of the Armenian genocide of 1915, growing up with her grandmother's and her father's memories of those days. In her work with MECC she recognised members of her family in the faces of those who were fleeing their countries, leaving everything behind them. The current challenge for the MECC was working with migrants and helping the internally displaced reintegrate in their home villages and towns.

Dr Ferris recalled the early 1980s when the violence in Central America was escalating and many Christians in the US sought ways to oppose their government's policies towards that region. The sanctuary movement was one response – by offering sanctuary and protection to refugees Christians were challenged to choose to be on the side of the uprooted. She described how some members of her Quaker meeting brought a proposal about offering sanctuary; but Quakers make decisions by consensus and if one person opposes something, it does not happen. This was the case, and it took two years before they finally agreed to offer sanctuary to a Guatemalan couple. But in this period, those in the Quaker meeting were transformed and their spiritual life in community deepened. That was the beginning of her work with refugees.

Bishop Johnson then told how, in 1991, he attended an awareness-building seminar for church leaders on refugee issues, jointly organised by the AACC and the WCC in Malawi. After listening to stories and analyses of the catastrophic plight of millions of displaced and uprooted, participants visited refugees in camps on the Malawi/Mozambique border. He was devastated, shaken to the core. He returned from that camp totally committed, under God, to do his utmost to address the effects and root causes of displacement. And he was further driven by the knowledge that, given the enormous instabilities everywhere in Africa, each person on that continent is a potential refugee. Today, with the help of colleagues in WCC, AACC, and UNHCR, the Anglican Diocese of Gambia is in the forefront in addressing the needs of refugees from many parts of Africa.

Emerging clearly here was the point that leadership matters. In Africa, if a bishop takes an issue seriously, things happen, otherwise the issue dies. So it does make a difference when church leaders are convinced of the urgency of an issue – that was why we were here in the Central Committee. The issue of global migration affects all of us. The numbers of people compelled to leave their homes continues to increase, while governments in both North and South are making it more difficult for refugees and migrant workers to find security. Racism and xenophobia are becoming alarmingly evident. People who are displaced within their own countries are particularly vulnerable.

The situation facing uprooted people is a scandal, an outrage. Most of the people concerned are women and children. It is the churches' issue, not just something to be dealt with by refugee and migration departments. Therefore the hope was that the challenge of responding to uprooted people would be taken up by the whole church. The issues are too urgent and too all-encompassing to be relegated to a specific programme ministry.

Finally, an attempt was made to explain how this statement was different from other statements on refugees made by the WCC in the past:

- we are talking about uprooted people who have been forced to leave their homes; uprooted like a tree pulled up from the earth, they are torn from their land;
- the issue is urgent, and we have to make sure that our humanitarian assistance contributes to a resolution of the situation which uprooted them;
- we are challenging our churches to take the risk of being on the side of the uprooted, to choose to be the church of the stranger, even if it means paying a price, making a sacrifice;

- we want to hear from the member churches about what they are doing, about the obstacles they face in their ministry to the uprooted, and how they need the WCC and the ecumenical family to support them;
- we have an opportunity to make a difference: it is a time to choose.

Members of Central Committee were invited to comment and reflect on their own experiences. What did they have to say? What would they do?

Discussion

A number of Central Committee members responded by giving personal testimonies or telling of their own experiences; many expressed appreciation for the thoughtful and challenging document, especially for the biblical and theological basis for the action proposed. Summaries of the interventions are included below.

Dr Tsetsis spoke of the uprootedness which affected his church – the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople – in the early 1920s, when more than one-and-a-half million believers were forced into exile as a result of ethnic cleansing. It is a church of uprooted people, forced to leave their homes and land for political considerations. He underlined the need to eradicate the root causes of uprootedness, and called upon member churches and agencies to give careful attention to the statement.

Mrs Tungane Williams described how her church leased land to the government to provide a place for those coming to the island to seek employment and education. Today there was no more land left but more and more migrants continue to arrive. What could they do as a church now?

Dr Patelos commended the attempt to awaken people from their general lack of concern, to make participants think and act together on these urgent and complex issues. He felt that decisions were needed at government level, through the United Nations – but it would take time before all the UN member states fully accept their responsibility. As WCC we must go on pushing and insisting that action be taken, but patience and prayer were needed as the task was not one that would soon be completed.

Fr Kishkovsky had also experienced the pain of being uprooted: he was born in Warsaw during World War II and soon afterwards his family fled to Germany as refugees in the French-occupied zone. In 1951 they left as displaced persons

to be relocated in the USA, made possible through an ecumenical Christian effort involving cooperation between the Orthodox in the US and the Lutheran Church. This experience meant the loss of many members of his family, as well as of the society and context in which he had grown up. In meeting others who have lost their homes, he can respond in a personal way, seeing them as members of his family. He reminded participants that when Christians work together they can make a great difference to those who are uprooted.

Dr Farfan raised the issue of Indigenous Peoples, particularly pertinent for Latin America and the Caribbean regions, where so many are forced to emigrate and then have no choice but to live in wretched conditions in the cities. They are literally uprooted because of the greed and desire on the part of others to exploit their lands and forests. Away from their surroundings they cease to be themselves. He asked that there be specific mention in the document to the problems of Indigenous Peoples.

Bishop Jonson told of a public hearing on the asylum policies of the Swedish government when constant reference was made to the UN Declaration on the Rights of the Child and how it was implemented. Sweden strongly supported the integration of this Declaration in national legislation. He suggested that a direct reference be made to it in the document.

Mr Vailaau added a request for reference not only to Indigenous People but also to colonised people in the Pacific region, who have lost their identity because their language has disappeared as a result of being uprooted. He also felt that specific mention should be made about environmental destruction in the Pacific especially in relation to nuclear testing.

In Mr Vailaau's view, the section on biblical references did not do justice to the Old Testament events which seem to lend support to uprooting people. Could some critique of that history be done, in terms of the political and economic threats of the time?

Frau Engel said that, in Hamburg, 18% of the population are migrants, and figures show this is likely to increase to 25% by the year 2005. One-fifth are refugees, entitled to asylum. Working with a church agency, she welcomed the document, but asked that some word of encouragement be included to those churches, congregations, ecumenical groups and other local initiatives, families and individuals who have already committed themselves to helping the uprooted.

Ms Kathindi welcomed the challenge to the churches to side with the uprooted but was concerned about the involvement of church leaders. As a fellow African, she asked Bishop Johnson for advice on how to convince church leaders of the need to commit themselves to this work.

Dr Larsson referred to the list of challenges that the churches might take up, but was doubtful about the wisdom of what might be seen as advocating civil disobedience – giving shelter to refugees, influencing governments, and so on. This should be spelled out more clearly to avoid misunderstanding.

In Cyprus, one-third of the population were displaced, said Metr. Chrysanthos. The Church of Cyprus has always helped uprooted people in finding new homes and jobs, and encouraging them amidst their difficulties. But memories were short and few remembered the thousands of people uprooted from Istanbul. Recalling the experience of Cyprus in its search for justice through the UN, decisions were made but no action was taken. He hoped that that would not be the case with this paper too – would the cry be heard? Justice was what was needed; without justice and peace the suffering of uprooted people would not find an end. The churches were aware of this; we have to communicate to those in the UN, in governments, who make the decisions.

Dr Wilkens underlined the need for an internationally recognised definition of refugees. In our efforts to protect refugees we come up against the question of whether they have the «right» status. Secondly, the paper should surely be seen not only as a call to diaconal aid to uprooted people, but as a clear confession of our conviction that human beings must live together. There was an ideology today which believed that a nation can only live in peace if it is not «bothered» by the presence of strangers/foreigners who do not belong to it». Any acceptance of a homogeneous state denies the rights of minorities. Therefore the churches have the task of speaking clearly in their own and in other societies where demands are being made to create such nationalistic states.

Mr Fejo spoke as an Indigenous person from Australia, another group of uprooted people. Not only the government but also churches and missions have caused this uprootedness, often taking young children from their parents and putting them into homes – cutting them off from their origins. Many of his people therefore have no song, no story – they have lost their language, their land, their homes. The churches and the government have to face up to this issue.

Thailand is the place of refuge for many uprooted people, said Ms Nontawasee. One of the problems the government has to deal with is the exodus of the hill tribes to the lowlands following a decree that the hill region be reserved for parkland. There is no work for the people, and the women are lured into prostitution. The Church of Christ in Thailand tries to be «the church for the stranger» in this and other difficult situations related to forced migration, discrimination and uprootedness.

In Vancouver, 59% of the children have English as their second language, said Barbara Bazett, giving an idea of the number of displaced and uprooted people. The term «uprooted» is a challenging one for the whole body of the church, not only for those on refugee committees. She felt that this was an area where Unit IV and the Programme to Overcome Violence could work together, especially in the areas of violence, working for conflict resolution, justice and peace, and so on. It would be helpful if programmes were developed that would suggest how people could take effective action in their own areas.

Responding, Dr Ferris expressed appreciation for the richness of the stories that had been told. She acknowledged the suggestions made for strengthening specific points in the paper and affirmed that these would be taken up in the revised text.

On Dr Larsson's point about civil disobedience, it was not the intention to advocate this, but it was up to a church to take its own decision. The intention was to offer a range of options, or ways of responding that could fit a variety of situations. She agreed with the need for churches to speak out more strongly; we do have the potential to assert ourselves more in international fora where decisions are made.

Regarding Dr Wilkens' suggestion to include a definition of refugees, Dr Ferris said that the present definition developed by the UN was quite narrow, and there was a feeling that it should be broadened. However, if the question of «who is a refugee» were reopened, it would give governments the opportunity to narrow down the definition still further; she therefore felt it was better not to broach the matter at this time.

Bishop Johnson responded to Ms Kathindi's request about how to convince church leaders of the need for commitment to helping the uprooted. Perhaps more awareness-building seminars should be organised, because there is a need to review what the mission of the church is, to be enabled to transform the unjust

structures of society; there is a need for the churches to be enabled to address issues of injustice, to do the necessary social analysis and to make this an integral part of the churches' ministry.

Dr Santana concluded the session, thanking all those who had contributed.

III. RACISM

Bishop Vinton Anderson, presiding, introduced the session. Racism having been for so long on the WCC's agenda, it should no longer be necessary to highlight the insidious nature of this evil which plagues church and society. Whether we talk of mission, uprooted people, or the Programme to Combat Racism, racism is real – perhaps more ominous now than ever before because it has become globalized.

Racism is not only in every corner of the globe, said Bishop Anderson – it is the way it has been transported from nation to nation – from one corner of the globe to another; the way transnational corporations do business; how uprooted people are exploited in their search for a place to survive with dignity; how nations write laws that exclude some while welcoming others; the manufacturing and marketing of arms. The crisis of the environment and the exploitation of natural resources have to do with economic inequity and social injustice; the market standards of one nation are being imposed on another solely with a profit motive; international businesses contract for cheap labour in other nations – and the list goes on.

A draft «framework document on racism»⁴ had been shared with members of Central Committee, presenting in summary form the ecumenical history and current challenges in the struggle to eradicate racism, as well as examining some of the current dilemmas in relation to refocusing the WCC's actions against racism.

The goal of the plenary was to stimulate discussion, engaging the wider implications of how racism impacted the global picture. Bishop Anderson introduced Rev. Dr Frank Chikane from South Africa, who, in his ministry and witness to the Christian faith, has been a prophetic voice for social action and an advocate for economic justice. As general secretary of the SACC he acted

⁴ see Appendix XII, documents available on request (no.6.5)

as a major link with the WCC. He is currently Professor in the Department of Religious Studies at the University of Cape Town and President of the Apostolic Faith Mission.

Dr Chikane recalled the bold and courageous stand taken against racism by the WCC when it established the Programme to Combat Racism (PCR). It was a risky undertaking, but also a symbolic act demonstrating solidarity with the victims of racism throughout the world. By its actions the WCC was not only a pioneer in the struggle against racism – it provided spiritual, moral and political leadership; it acted as a catalyst for international action against the South African regime at a time when no one was prepared to touch such a controversial issue. He was constrained to thank once more all those who through the WCC had worked to eliminate the apartheid system. Today South Africa was free and we must give glory and honour to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ!

For many, the end of apartheid in South Africa signified the end of racism, and even the end of the Special Fund to Combat Racism – but this was far from the truth. That overt form of racism may have been suppressed but the spirit of racism remained alive. Economic power was still in place, and the struggle against hunger, poverty and homelessness was only beginning. The challenge for South Africa was therefore the struggle for economic justice for all. Without a change in the economic and social conditions of the black majority, racist tendencies would remain.

Internationally, we have witnessed a new wave of racism manifested in forms that have not been seen before. The end of the cold war, increasing globalization of the racist far right-wing movement, globalization of the economy; the growing gap between poor and rich and the related massive immigration problem – all these and other factors had ushered in a new era where the power of technology and knowledge were monopolised by the few to enhance their power even further, to the detriment of the poor.

As the gap widened and the world was divided into two very different parts, the powerful, the privileged, felt ever more threatened by «the other». The cold war provided an «enemy image» that could be blamed for evil deeds, but now new images have to be sought to justify the evils being perpetrated. Attempts were being made to define «the other» in terms of religion or culture or skin colour. This image of «otherness» – specifically in relation to people of colour – was the basis of racism.

Any victory tends to lead to at least two outcomes: firstly, the victory against apartheid might inspire us to show more commitment to eliminating racism altogether; the moment of victory can serve as a reference point to think back on during difficult times in our lives; it can be an assurance that it is possible to wage a successful struggle against the forces of evil in the world. But the second and more dangerous outcome was that we may be lulled by such a victory into believing that the goal has been achieved.

The evil of racism is world-wide; it is not limited to the institutionalised racism that was apartheid. So unless we globalise our strategies to combat racism we cannot succeed. As the church is to some extent globalised, however, there is no reason why we cannot fight racism in the world today. Dr Chikane ended by urging participants to renew their efforts to fight against racism. The churches must take the lead and develop the necessary tools. It is our responsibility to stand up and accept the challenge and eliminate racism wherever it is found.

Discussion – focusing on the globalisation of racism

Dr Tolen thanked Dr Chikane for his reminder that the end of apartheid did not mean the end of racism, as his experience of the US Hearings on Racism as a Violation of Human Rights had shown. The purpose of the Eminent Persons Team was not to act as a court, but rather to listen to witnesses and then attempt to pin-point the «institutionalisation» of racism. He cited examples demonstrating that there are elements in US structures which promote racism, with different standards being applied according to whether a culprit was poor or rich, which meant whether he/she was a person of colour or not. Yet the problem was not confined to the US and attention should focus on all countries where such manifestations of racism take place. He concluded by asking whether there was evidence of racism in the churches, or in the WCC? Such questions must be faced before assuming that such problems belong only to others.

Mrs Mwondha noted that economic power was in the hands of the same people who held it during the apartheid regime. Something must now be done to redress the imbalances and inequalities created by racism and the resulting economic injustices. To correct the imbalance, much depended on political goodwill which can provide a climate for change and social order. Economic policies must be formulated taking into account the need to avoid discrimination against women, who continue to suffer oppression as a result of cultural traditions.

On the issue of global racism, Mrs Mwondha agreed this would remain on the agenda for a long time to come in view of unjust economic policies endangering the less developed countries. She asked what was the value of grants from the IMF and the World Bank which have strings attached and where the so-called «experts» had less knowledge than the indigenous people of the area – this in her view was the highest degree of exploitation. These unjust economic policies reflected racism and must be prevented if any headway were to be made.

Dr Park Jong-Wha compared racism in South Africa to a cancer that had been removed, but added that there were still many consequences that had to be dealt with. PCR had been successful in fighting a common enemy, but there were new enemies now: how could we help South Africans recover so that they may live a common shared life? That was the second stage of the process and he called on PCR to continue the struggle. This would mean motivating and mobilising people to confront an enemy which was no longer clear-cut. As we approach the Jubilee the WCC must develop new strategies to serve as a model for others.

Dr Chikane, responding, said he was now engaged in the area of reconstruction and development. He had to ask himself whether it was possible to achieve what had been promised to the people: goodwill alone would not change the economic system. It was necessary to seek new models outside the country in order to carry out the necessary reconstruction.

Ms Nontawasee was challenged to ask herself what victory, freedom, meant to her. Thailand had never been colonised; the Thai people were proud to be free, but they had become slaves of globalisation with its emphasis on market forces. People had become very individualistic, the slave trade still went on but no one seemed concerned.

Mr Akhura was grateful for Dr Chikane's suggestions of ways of assisting churches to understand the changes that are occurring. Countries like Kenya had to change out of their present situation; they need to obtain economic power, but this would not happen unless the people were properly educated. He stressed the importance of appropriate educational material; in his view the church should be at the forefront in providing educational possibilities.

Barbara Bazett agreed that celebration of a victory could be a reference point to continue the struggle. She had despaired of the power of the multi-national corporations, and had been praying to see where the forces for good were in the world that might overcome such power. And it became clear that the churches

were potentially the most powerful bodies! But she felt the WCC was not aware of how much it could do, working together on all the issues which are of concern –including racism, the arms trade, and economic evils in the world. We do have the capacity to keep informed transnationally through the churches. She quoted Archbishop Tutu's statement that the evils of the world are too big for a divided church, and urged that we must continue together to combat racism.

Dr Chikane noted that the long struggle in South Africa had helped the people experience what had taken place in other independent states. There had been so much campaigning on the issue of human rights that it was difficult for those who were not happy about where the country was heading to take an anti-human rights view. There was a strongly held view that human rights should be the governing basis for everything, and he hoped that vision would never be lost.

However, all too often Africa had become a footnote, was forgotten altogether or mentioned last. He was looking for a world where all people would be treated equally, not as first or second-class citizens according to skin colour. He wanted to see some dramatic change – but this would require a more strategically designed programme to reverse what was happening in the world today. Making statements was not enough. Either we end racism by ending the economic inequalities that define most of our relationships, or we tell people that nothing will change until Christ comes again.

Dr Walker-Smith referred to the framework document that had been shared with members of Central Committee. She found the historical overview very useful, especially as it stimulated thought on the future directions that might be taken in this area; the story-telling also was a helpful resource. The issue of racism in the church was important and she hoped it would be a focus for discussion. In the US setting it was important to remember the shift from civil rights to human rights: this was a key to the future of the racism debate. Secondly, she pointed to the need for a greater emphasis on women and children under racism.

Mr Gill also found the document helpful because it took the history seriously and recognised the complexity of the task to be faced today. He mentioned some specific points where he felt further work needed to be done on the paper: the question «Why did it take over 40 years for the ecumenical movement to move from word to action?» was in his view an over-simplification. In 1969 at the Racism Consultation in Notting Hill, Dr Visser 't Hooft, then WCC general secretary, was self-critical in evaluating the WCC's experience up to that point: he felt it had mistakenly over-estimated the power of ecumenical statements in

terms of action. In 1969/1970, the WCC did find a powerful way of acting – by creating the Programme to Combat Racism – which spoke to the world and to the churches with a power that few things have matched. So now, asked Mr Gill, can we conceive a way of acting in our time that does justice to the complexities of racism and which will have the same dynamic effect?

Secondly, he expressed some concern about how this document would be read from the experience of the Asian churches. The way they relate to some of the issues was perhaps more complex than in some other regions. He pleaded that particular consideration be given to the complexities of Asia in the course of developing a world response to the evil of racism.

Bishop Finlay appreciated the story-telling style of the document and he hoped this methodology would be repeated. In Canada, racism was very subtle and many people would deny its presence, but it was in the power of the story that they were convicted.

Bishop Anderson then invited **Bishop Melvin Talbert** to report on the **US Hearings on Racism as a Violation of Human Rights** which took place in October 1994 in seven sites in the United States.

Bishop Talbert expressed gratitude to the WCC for responding to the cry for help by setting up the Hearings. He described the process, planned jointly by WCC and NCCCUSA staff. A national committee coordinated the hearings, selected the sites and facilitated the work of the local planning teams.

A team of International Eminent Persons was selected, led by Dr Aaron Tolen, including church leaders, human rights experts and political leaders from Tonga, South Africa, Malaysia, Zimbabwe, Jamaica, Cameroon, the UK, Argentina and Barbados. The sites of the Hearings were chosen to highlight specific human rights violations, and to include a variety of ethnic/racial groups.

The team spent two days in each site and participated in formal hearings and exposure experiences – an effective methodology. They heard testimony from more than 200 people on issues of police brutality, political prisoners, prison conditions, sentencing, housing, education, employment, health, immigration, sovereignty and self-determination, and environmental racism.

The importance of the Hearings lay in several factors: they had begun the process of changing the discourse from domestic to international remedies for

addressing the racism that exists; as well as providing a unique forum for people of colour in the US to hear each others' stories and struggles, they opened up the process for beginning to hold the US accountable to international law; they had begun to expose the deep levels of anger, frustration, powerlessness and marginalization of Black Americans, Native Americans, Asian Americans, Pacific Islanders and Hispanic Americans in the USA.

Since the Hearings, a delegation had participated in the meetings of the UN Commission on Human Rights in February 1995 in Geneva. A follow-up meeting in May 1995 discussed strategies at congregational, denominational, national and international levels, and the Continuation Committee of the Campaign would meet later in the year to concretize the next steps. A report on the whole campaign process would be available by November 1995.

Concluding, Bishop Talbert urged Central Committee to reaffirm its commitment to the struggle against racism. The issue of racism as a violation of human rights must remain a high priority for the WCC in the foreseeable future.

Rev. Eunice Santana, from Puerto Rico, began by reiterating that racism was not yet a thing of the past; as long as there were avarice and colonialism, as long as there were economic inequalities, racism would remain alive. It was growing and manifesting itself all over the world with the globalisation of the economy. Throughout the years we have come to understand how colonisers, in order to ease their consciences and to justify robbing others' lands and resources, wiping them out or submitting them to slavery, colonised peoples as inferior, as less than human, unfit for self-government.

Racism was ultimately about power; exclusion and exploitation for economic gain; underlying rejection, downgrading of the excluded. Racism was not only very much alive – it was increasing and gaining in strength. The general understanding was that people of colour do not deserve any better. In a world where 20% of the people have control over 82% of the wealth of humanity and the other 20% have control of 11%; in a world where 4 billion persons were no longer marginalised but actually excluded from society, we have to say that racism is very much alive. It is even justified in the name of efficiency and competitiveness. In a world where we are witness to the death each day of so many from starvation, from curable diseases, we have to admit that racism is very much alive.

In face of this, Dr Santana was convinced of the call to the Christian community to resist, to reverse the trends: this was our challenge. It was no small task, but that was what living the gospel was all about – to change the reality, to work for economic equality, to restore dignity and hope, eradicating racism. We are challenged to recommit ourselves to increase support to the Special Fund to Combat Racism. What a joyful day it will be when we can say that racism is a thing of the past!

Discussion

Metr. Chrysostomos reiterated that the greatest enemies for Africans and for people of colour were not the known enemies but the unknown ones, particularly those who encouraged racism, who consider inferior. We cannot combat racism without the kind of spirituality found among the early Christians which took for granted that all people, regardless of skin colour, are brothers and sisters.

Ms Koh referred to the issue of overt and covert forms of racism. In her experience, Asian American communities were susceptible to covert forms of racism and she hoped the WCC would address this issue, recognising that in order for the churches to be leaders of society in the fight against racism, they must develop pro-active strategies and preventive actions to attack covert forms of racism. She hoped the document would also address racism among and between peoples of colour, and concurred with the view of Mr Gill with regard to the perspective of the Asian churches.

Bishop Rogerson felt that, if the WCC was serious about combating racism, it was important to produce the best possible document to achieve that. Could the WCC match the economic expertise necessary to do the critical analysis required? If not, could such expertise not be mobilised from amongst the people of God? Secondly, he wondered whether some link could be made in the document with the consultation on «Ethnicity and Nationalism: A Challenge to the Churches» held in November 1994 in Sri Lanka, jointly sponsored by WCC, LWF and WARC, where some analysis of ethnic conflict took place.

The beginnings of some theological basis were given in the document and the Bishop added three points: Christ taught us that we must love our enemies, while Frank Chikane showed us that racism is about creating «the other», the enemy. Secondly, the good news in Jesus Christ is about reconciliation, breaking down the walls of separation: some reference to this should be included. And thirdly,

he referred to the relevance here of a theology of «embrace», as developed in a paper⁵ delivered at the consultation on Ethnicity and Nationalism.

Dr Mac Charles Jones said that one of the effects of racism on its victims was the feeling of being diminished; people tended to adopt the values of the dominant structure and this could prove self-destructive, creating conflicts between the various ethnic communities themselves because they have internalised the values of others, and it was felt to be less risky to destroy each other than to fight the system. For him the question was how to take the issues from this «table» to the «tables» in local communities where every issue was defined in terms of racism. We have to create these «tables» and start engaging in structural analysis – otherwise we would have only resolution but no action. He added that it was important to appeal to the white community and to show them that maintaining racism costs too much – not only for the victims but for the structures supporting it.

Ms Rani referred to the world as a global village and pointed out that there was a very thin line between ethno-centrism and racism. The churches were already involved in efforts to combat racism and there were many stories that could be told. She felt that more such stories could be included in the document.

Mr Rüegger agreed with Dr Chikane that it was easier to take a clear stance against a defined enemy like apartheid than to be sensitive to racism in our own context. His church was growing increasingly aware of how much the commitment to combat racism was an important part of the peace witness expected of us today. He wondered how PCR and the Programme to Overcome Violence were connected, in structural and methodological terms.

Ms Davies-Izard testified to the fact that covert racism was still rife in many organisations and institutions in Britain, and gave examples of the way she, as a person of mixed race, was discriminated against. This greatly affected her as she grew up, and now she was concerned for the future of her young son who is more fair skinned than she is, resembling her white husband. She noted that the document dealt mainly with «white racism», but in her context there was a great deal of racism within the black community and between black people and Asians. This often overt form of racism had to be challenged, and communities

⁵ reprinted in *The Ecumenical Review*, vol.47, April 1995, p.195ff

have to work through the issues that lie behind the various expressions of racism. She urged PCR to do more awareness raising within black communities.

Dr Turner felt the document needed expanding in terms of how the economic situation in a local context tends to support the continuation of racism. It is difficult to get the world to acknowledge the existence of racism. People find it hard to believe that racism has to do with the violation of human rights. There are also those in our churches who remain unaware that racism exists within their own communities, so we have to show that racism is an evil that must be eradicated.

Ms Mendis stressed the need to address the caste question, and in particular the situation of Dalits. In Asia there was a good deal of racism in the economic sphere; the free trade zones offer cheap labour, and certain menial jobs are allocated to certain ethnic groups – this too had to be recognised as racism, and such issues might be addressed in the slightly less «diplomatic» style of PCR.

Bishop Omoyajowo pointed out that in Nigeria he was treated as a «second-rate» citizen as he came from the Christian South. Attention needs to be given to the destructive evils that are rife in many societies, especially in Africa.

Dr Seddoh affirmed that racism was still like a poison eating away at our societies, and all of us must be challenged and ask ourselves how we relate to racism. The situation in Togo had changed and the leadership holding political and economic power dominated society. Some hope had been kindled with the various democratic processes being undertaken, but ethnic questions were re-emerging and could dash the earlier hopes. The problem challenging all of us was: What can we do to prevent the ethnic issue from destroying all that has been achieved?

Ms Welch welcomed the emphasis on migration and racism in the document but felt the text could expand further on immigration policies, with some reference to the way theology challenges these laws, and the way we as churches can challenge such policies in our own countries. Secondly, she agreed it was appropriate to refer to the «vultures» of racism, but the tendency to see black communities as victims to be pitied should be avoided and more emphasis placed on how much these communities have to offer. Negative images were not always helpful in our struggle; more could be made of the «community of hope» and the challenge from the black to the white community. Specific recommendations for action as member churches would be helpful in terms of focus for developing what they can do.

Ms K. Williams took up the point about covert racism, noting that many people in our churches do not consider themselves as racist. Covert racism was a real part of churches in her community, and she saw it as a greater problem than overt racism. When people are subtle in their racism, there is not always opportunity for an opposing voice, but when they are publicly racist, others respond publicly and the opposing voice is heard. Furthermore, covert racist behaviour can develop into «folkways», passing to future generations as «the way things are».

Ms Massey, a youth adviser from India, was disappointed that no representative from Asia had spoken specifically on the racism practised against Indigenous People in Asia. The document did make a reference to this, but it failed to elaborate. She herself came from a context where Dalits daily experience violence and other ugly forms of discrimination. She underlined the remarks made by Mr Gill and pressed for a fuller reference to the issue of castism as racism.

Bishop Anderson expressed appreciation for the contributions to the discussion and for the suggestions made with regard to the framework document.

IV. GLOBAL GOVERNANCE

Dr Aaron Tolen, presiding, invited the General Secretary to introduce the theme of this session.

Dr Raiser began by stating how appropriate it was for Central Committee to devote attention to the issue of Global Governance during this fiftieth anniversary year of the United Nations. A background paper – Memorandum and Recommendations on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the United Nations (Appendix VI) – already discussed in the Unit Committees, would come to Central Committee for adoption in the context of the Report of the Unit III Committee.

Despite criticisms, it was important to recall the remarkable achievements of the United Nations over its fifty year history. Although it had not succeeded in preventing wars, it had prevented a third world war which, in the nuclear age, could have been disastrous. It was instrumental in ending the colonial era, and had achieved significant progress in arms control. Its efforts to build a more effective social and political world order through its agencies demonstrated a remarkable achievement.

Nevertheless, many stories could be told about the failures of the international community. Ten years ago the Central Committee pointed to a «crisis of confidence in international institutions... and a gradual erosion in the authority of the UN». After the Cold War there was a moment of hope for the UN when it was able to resolve a number of destructive regional conflicts, but all too soon the crisis of confidence in international institutions deepened again.

A Jubilee is a time not only to celebrate, but a time to pause and rekindle a vision for the future. The notion of «global governance» gives rise to great controversy today. The tendency to focus attention mainly on global institutions risks the danger of forgetting the marginalisation and destruction of cultures that has happened to some of the world's peoples.

We must address governance at all levels of human society. A crisis also exists in the governance of individual nations in terms of corruption, mismanagement of economies, neglect of social needs, and discrimination of all kinds, causing widespread disillusionment with traditional politics and party structures. It may be true that the churches cannot be held accountable for this because many have neither sufficient power nor influence to change the way the people is governed. But how well do we model a truly just, inclusive, democratic society in our own structures? What leadership do churches provide to their societies in terms of good government? Or have the churches withdrawn into their own problems to the exclusion of wider social responsibilities?

It was striking that leaders of international institutions increasingly describe their situation as a spiritual crisis and turn to the churches for guidance and inspiration. In fact, contemporary problems in governance of human societies often have marked religious dimensions. Bridges must be built and new levels of common understanding and action achieved, but the problem is so vast that Christians alone cannot handle it.

Dr Raiser expressed regret at the absence of Dame Nita Barrow, Governor General of Barbados, Secretary-General of the 1985 UN Women's Conference in Nairobi, and former staff member of the WCC, who had also been invited to address this session. She had asked that her good wishes be conveyed to the Central Committee.

Dr Tolen welcomed **Dr Rubem César Fernandes** from Brazil, of the Institute for Studies of Religion in Rio de Janeiro, a lay member of the Presbyterian Church. An anthropologist, he had taught in the UK, the USA and in France; and was

named «intellectual of the year» by a major Brazilian daily newspaper for his work on civil society movements. Dr Fernandes' address, «Back and Forward to 'Civil Society'»⁶ had been written at the request of the Working Group on Poverty, Economy and Environment of Unit III in 1993 to serve as an instrument for internal discussion, and was submitted to Central Committee as a line of thought sparked by Unit III's debates on «Civil Society». The essay expressed intensive practical experimentation in Latin America; the Viva Rio Movement in Brazil was an example of the implementation of the ideas expressed. Rather than reading the text, he shared in some detail his own experiences with Viva Rio.

After a decade of economic depression in Rio de Janeiro, social deterioration and growing urban violence led the city to traumatic events. The environment became defensive and aggressive and more and more people were emigrating. Street children and beggars were killed at night by the police. At the worst point of this deterioration, a group of about 40 people – business and union leaders, NGO representatives, slum leaders, cultural representatives, media and church representatives got together: the city was sinking and something had to be done. A co-ordinating group was established; the focus was on violence and security.

The launching of the movement took place three months later, in three «acts»:

- Act I: the whole population of the city was invited to keep two minutes' silence at noon on a predetermined date. This caught people's attention: the church bells rang just before midday, the police helped coordinate the process, the stock market, even the city, stopped, and most people observed the silence.
- Act II: there was an enormous response to an invitation to hold prayers for the city – all at the same time, each group in a different place, according to its tradition.
- Act III: included seminars to reflect on violence, organized by a citizens' commission, addressing two questions: What can be done **next year** to reduce violence? How can civil society help? An agenda was built up of specific points to be pursued, reflecting an intense symbolic effort and pragmatic approach.

⁶ See Appendix XII – Documents available on request (6.12)

Viva Rio continues and has become a reference point for other movements. Numerous actions have been taken, including discussions at all government levels on what it was feasible to do in the short term; a minimum agenda was given to all candidates before the 1994 elections; a partnership was proposed to the government; the business sector was approached on how to move from wild capitalism to a just allocation of capital; publicity material that spoke to people was prepared (especially important for voluntary and media groups). This all helped to develop a sense of solidarity across the city.

Civil society is an important third space of action between government and the market. In order for such initiatives to succeed, it is crucial to address the services directly, not the politicians. In conclusion, Dr Fernandes said that, in many debt-ridden countries like Brazil, the state alone was unable to deal adequately with social problems: partnership with civil society was necessary. The voluntary sector of civil society in such circumstances must involve itself, as well as its time and money, and not simply leave it to the state. It is, after all, the people's problem.

Dr Raiser then introduced **Dr M. M. Thomas**, who was moderator of Central Committee between Uppsala (1968) and Nairobi (1975); his long career in the ecumenical movement began with the WSCF, then with CCA (formerly the East Asia Christian Conference), and continued in India where he was director of the Christian Institute for the Study of Religion and Society in Bangalore. A lay theologian, he was chairperson of the WCC's Church and Society conference in 1966. He also served a term as governor of the Indian state of Nagaland.

Dr Thomas expressed his pleasure at the chance to address Central Committee again, 20 years on. Central Committee had always cast a spiritual spell on people which he could not avoid. He had therefore responded with joy to the invitation. His subject was «Humanising the Structures of 'Global Governance'». ⁷

When the Ecumenical Patriarch mooted the idea of forming a fellowship of churches in 1920, one of the arguments was that the churches should not «fall.. behind the political authorities». After World War II the ecumenical movement played a significant part in the formation of the United Nations, especially in emphasising the concern for justice and peace in the UN Charter, and relations between the WCC and the UN through CCIA over the years have been vital for

⁷ See Appendix XII – documents available on request (6.11)

the witness of the ecumenical movement in the struggle for peace and justice within and among the nations.

Dr Thomas focused his attention on the role of the church and the ecumenical movement in global governance. This term had come into vogue more recently, and today it meant the manner in which global power is exercised for the efficient management of economic and social resources of the various countries for development, understood as economic growth through the free market.

Explaining the theological, ethical concept of humanisation as an expression of our faith in the context of the givenness of ultimate salvation in Christ, Dr Thomas referred to the three covenants mentioned in the Old Testament which God made with all humanity. They symbolise God's creating and redeeming activities in the world. In Colossian Christology, these covenants and the accompanying human vocations were seen as fulfilled in the Divine Humanity of Jesus Christ, through whom all creation comes into being, and in whom all creation holds together, despite the forces of disintegration.

The calling to create and develop cultures arose out of the involvement and transcendence of the human self in relation to nature and to others under God's purpose. Since human creativity was involved in the spirit of alienation from God which leads to self-alienation, all creativity contained the seeds of destruction. Moral realism thus required that forces of destruction present in human creations be constantly checked by appeals to moral conscience, pressure of public opinion, the fear of punishment, and so on. These gave added import to the Christian mission of humanisation of tragic human situations in the context of the hope and foretaste of the experience of ultimate salvation.

What did this mean for the humanisation of the structures of global governance today? Modern science and technology, developments in economics, capitalism and socialism have all been expressions of human creativity, containing the potential for a fuller and richer life for all peoples. But they had all become morally ambiguous, and in some cases had even become means of aggression against God and neighbour.

Therefore the mission of the church and the ecumenical movement in relation to the global governance of economic and social development today involved denouncing the utopianism that dominates the market ideology and redefines the limited function of the market within a realistic anthropology; and at the same time to mobilise a combination of moral public opinion with available organised

political pressure to enable a more democratic restructuring of global governance in the UN, to make it more accountable to those whose welfare is affected.

Dr Thomas went on to discuss the ideology of communism, referring to Marx and Berdyaev, over against Adam Smith and the free market concept, quoting from a number of recent studies on these issues. The market, useful for helping economic efficiency in the sense of maximising the productivity of scarce resources, could not address the many social issues that exist in societies.

The WCC, in the evolution of its sustained social thought, did separate the market from the «enlightenment» faith, mechanistic world-view and individualistic understanding of society, placing it within the framework of a more realistic faith and value commitment, and structuring it within a more pragmatic realm of political economy. The Amsterdam Assembly in 1948 rejected both «laissez-faire» capitalism and communism, and affirmed the need to evaluate any society with the criteria of the «responsible society».

Later gatherings pointed out that the concrete issues of economics were no longer about the market versus the state, but about their relative roles in development and justice. In 1969, CCPD (Commission on the Churches' Participation in Development) reversed the order of priorities and began with social justice, self-reliance and economic growth. Dr Thomas traced the development of the different arguments through various texts over the years.

In third world countries today, the pattern of development under global governance had highlighted the relation between ecological issues and social justice, as many peoples' movements against modern development indicate. Women today feel increasingly alienated and exploited by the mechanistic interpretation of reality in modern development. The conversion of women's sexuality, fertility and of their labour into commodities in the market does violence to their dignity as persons.

The demand to develop a post-modern holistic humanism cannot be avoided in the present situation. Only a dialogue among religious faiths, secular ideologies and scientific disciplines on the reconstruction and renewal of traditional community values in a post-modern framework could be the answer. Dr Thomas' point here was that in any market-directed growth-oriented economy, social and ecological objectives could be realised only by acknowledging the intervening role of the state representing the whole national society and informed by a personalistic interpretation of reality. Any governance that does not give priority

to people's participation in the political process for converting economic growth into development will only make the market inhuman and heartless.

In view of their commitment to development and solidarity with victims, the churches and the ecumenical movement cannot opt out of the present inhuman situation but must look at ways of humanising the structures of global governance. Proposals for holding the IMF and the World Bank accountable as envisaged in the UN Charter demanded careful consideration.

Concluding, Dr Thomas suggested that the answer lay in renewed efforts towards developing national and international structures that are more responsive to the concerns of people, especially those who are victims of the status quo. The particular challenge was to shape a United Nations that would be substantially more supportive of authentic social development. In that quest, the spiritual struggle against idolatry, translated into realistic political terms, has a vital role to play.

Discussion

Speakers expressed appreciation for the presentations. A number of points were raised with regard to use of particular terminology and referring to specific paragraphs in the texts provided by the speakers. Recorded below are some of the more concrete contributions to the debate.

Dr Granberg-Michaelson saw this session as provoking reflection on changing world conditions and how these might inform the future of the WCC and its ecumenical witness. He asked Dr Fernandes how he perceived the WCC and its ecumenical partners to be responding to the challenges outlined in his paper, and urged the Central Committee to take them into account as it reflected on the 50 years since the UN was founded.

Mr Koshy was grateful for the realistic assessment of the new world situation. Many Christian economists were confused after the collapse of the socialist experiment, and many were unable to reconcile themselves to the new situation. States must be enabled to minimise the evils of economic liberalisation and urbanisation, and he felt the WCC could help bring together Christian economists and thinkers to identify actions churches could take and exert pressure on the World Bank, the IMF, to make them more accountable.

Ms Nontawasee felt that human values had been reduced and human beings robbed of their full humanity, children and women being the most vulnerable. One of the ways the church had survived had been by «bending in the wind», but were there not ways of taking strong action against these dehumanising tendencies?

Dr Laham asked Dr Thomas to expand on the relation of the global market with global culture and global political and military power when one nation prevails. What can be done in relation to the smaller groups within nations which are losing their identity? It is not only a matter of development in relation to social justice, but recognition of identity and culture. Was there a way of limiting globalisation by strengthening the regional aspects which are closer to the people and the culture, that would allow for dialogue between the local, the regional and the global?

Dr Park Jong Wha requested some elaboration from Dr Fernandes on how to structure ecumenical bodies so that they fit into society. Taking up points made by Dr Thomas, he commented on the often unfair situations created in the UN – first by possible undue influence by the Secretary-General, and secondly by the fact that only five nations dominate political action through the Security Council, leaving the rest of the members like appendages. The same was true of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty which was only an agreement among non-nuclear powers. What can we do as churches to build up civil society and to bring about some harmonisation among international fora?

Metr. Chrysostomos asked Dr Thomas whether Christians should speak about humanisation or Christianisation of society? He felt that Dr Thomas's thesis could lead to anarchy, since it implied that society was possible without democracy. What was «realistic» anthropology? Surely there was only one possible anthropology for Christians.

Mr Mosha said that the struggle in Africa was to find a way out of the abyss of degradation and poverty to achieve a level of human dignity. Once we stray from God we lose our humanity and this leads to suffering. The church must provide a response to the physical needs so that they do not form a barrier in taking the message of good news to the people.

Bishop Zacharias appreciated the message brought by both speakers in showing what is needed for a better world in the modern context. Global government and civil society both necessitate structural change – political, economic and governmental – which must all take on a human face, otherwise there can be no welfare for the people. The Rio experiment demonstrated what can be done

at local level, but, he asked, what role can the church and the ecumenical movement play at global level? The market economy offers a profit motive rather than a sharing motive. The WCC has a contribution to make in that context.

Dr Fernandes responded to some of the main points:

- We are brought back to the formulation of the nation-state as the centre of power for society where decisions could be made. But how to get to the centre of power to do what we think should be done? On reaching any level of power, you find the power is elsewhere. Where there is a polycentric system, several centres of power operate simultaneously; not everything can be controlled from one point. Action is relative. Christian tradition contains elements to help with the uncertainties of relative action and to move beyond the anxieties caused by power.
- The church is not an NGO, except in legal language; churches never fit properly within the state or society – they are transcendental. It is crucial for civil society that the symbolic and transcendental dimensions of the churches feed into it.
- The market is here to stay, therefore we need to see the churches in relation to it. However, it is better to talk of markets in the plural since they are embedded in historic societies. Churches could approach markets. Examples can be cited out of the Rio situation where business people are investing in slums – inclusion is a requirement for stability. Social and environment costs are necessary for development.
- Regarding the ecumenical movement in Rio: faith and witnessing are crucial for credibility. The post-cold war period is an opportunity to revise alliances and positions; the ecumenical movement needs time for this. Static differences must be revised and become dynamic.
- On the interfaith movement: there are over twenty different traditions in Rio. Interfaith is an internal situation of a society becoming multicultural. The question is not so much one of dialogue as the need for interaction. The ecumenical movement has an ethical basis which brings us back to the enlightenment tradition, which was strong on ethics.

Dr Thomas gave his response:

- Interfaith related to humanisation: humanisation means taking away corruption, ensuring that institutions serve the human being and not the other way round. Fundamentalism is a reaction against mechanical secularism; there is a lot of religious fundamentalism and communalism today, but the answer

is not a closed secularism, but rather a coming together in the name of humanity, of the humanum. There is need for a common anthropology to be developed which takes account of the social and religious dimension of the human being. A holistic understanding of the human being must take place: what does it mean to be human, to become human? This is something we can talk about with people of other faiths and ideologies.

- The victims of development are those who find their livelihood destroyed by it, and many are organising themselves in new ways to fight for their rights. If civil society is to improve life for the people, it must identify with them, with the suffering. But ultimately you cannot get away from the political process. Not only the church must have an option for the poor; the state must also have that option, and not be allowed to withdraw from its obligations for the welfare of the people.

Dr Tolen closed the session, thanking the speakers for having spoken not only as intellectuals but also out of their Christian engagement.

EIGHTH ASSEMBLY

Dr Nababan, presiding, introduced representatives of the Zimbabwe Council of Churches, Rt Rev. Jonathan Siyachitema, President of the ZCC, his daughter Ms Rosemary Siyachitema who would be coordinating the Assembly Office in Zimbabwe, and Rev. Murombedzi Kuchera, General Secretary of the ZCC.

Two plenary sessions were assigned to receive a series of reports in relation to the Eighth Assembly: from the Assembly Planning Committee (APC), the Assembly Worship Committee (AWC) (both of which had met since the last meeting of Central Committee in January 1994), and a recommendation from the Executive Committee with regard to the proposed Allocation of Seats for Delegates.

The documents related to the work of the APC were also considered by the Unit Committees and their comments shared with the General Secretariat Committee so that it could bring coordinated proposals for Central Committee action. The GS Committee would also bring recommendations regarding Seat Allocations.

I. Plenary Presentation and Discussion

Bishop Jonas Jonson, moderator of the APC, introduced the **Report of the Assembly Planning Committee (APC)**, highlighting a number of points. He felt there was reason to believe that this assembly could be a very important one in the life of the World Council in view of the liturgical re-commitment to the ecumenical movement by the assembly and by church leaders, and the re-dedication to the task before us to God in whom we put our hope in confidence and joy.

The **Assembly Worship Committee** had met in June and its proposals had not yet been considered by the APC. Bishop Jonson pointed to the recommendation that there be no Eucharist within the official assembly programme; the AWC wished for some guidance here from the Central Committee.

Bishop Jonathan Siyachitema then addressed participants, expressing the joy felt by the churches in Zimbabwe when Central Committee chose Harare as the venue for the Eighth Assembly. They were eagerly anticipating the assembly and were committed to making it a success. Several local committees had been appointed, and an assembly office would be opened on 1 October 1995. Every effort would be made to ensure the smooth running of the assembly and all participants would be made welcome in Zimbabwe.

Rev. Nélide Ritchie, reporting on behalf of the Executive Committee, presented the revised proposals for the **Allocation of seats for Delegates**. This was referred to the General Secretariat Committee.

Dr Nababan then opened the floor for discussion on matters related to the Eighth Assembly.

Discussion on proposal not to have a Eucharist at the Assembly

The major issue raised was the Worship Committee's recommendation to the APC that there be no eucharist within the official programme of the Assembly. Clear stands were taken both in favour and against the recommendation, and the main points of the arguments are included below.

The relevant text from the report of the Assembly Worship Committee (AWC) reads as follows:

The Committee (AWC) came to the view that it would be better to recognise «that there are at present within the fellowship of the WCC unresolved differences of eucharistic theology and practice» which preclude partaking of the eucharist by all within one service; the Committee intends to recommend to the APC that there be no eucharist within the official programme of the Eighth Assembly. The Committee believes that this could be a step forward to recognise that we no longer want to have a eucharist in which we cannot all share and which speaks of our division rather than our unity in Christ. ...

..The Committee is recommending to the APC that there be an all night vigil on Sunday 13 September as an expansion of the «service of preparation» (as described in the guidelines for Communion Services at Ecumenical Gatherings agreed by Central Committee in 1963). Initial plans would focus on the cross as a symbol of our divisions at the Lord's Table with prayers of penitence and prayers for unity... The image of the

cross and resurrection is central.. – turning to God is a turning to the cross – as one expression of the Assembly theme. The AWC believes that the proposals reflect the current ecumenical reality, giving space for grieving as well as for penitence, and acts of forgiveness leading to services of celebration and commitment.

Dr Tsetsis agreed with the proposal because he felt that a eucharistic service which excludes some people only sharpens our divisions further instead of manifesting our unity. He argued that some protestant churches whose delegates take the eucharist together at WCC meetings have not themselves achieved full communion; assembly eucharist services thus offer only an illusion of unity. He felt that while protestants sometimes consider the position of the Orthodox towards this issue as arrogant, this is dictated by Orthodox ecclesiology which is radically different from that of protestants.

Dr Tveter, a member of the AWC, explained what was behind the recommendation. Although members would have wanted to have one eucharist, they knew from the painful experience in Canberra that that was not possible at the present time and was unlikely to be so by 1998. They therefore concluded that the most realistic proposal was that there be no common eucharist in the official programme. This did not of course preclude confessional eucharistic celebrations. It was felt that an all-night vigil to pray for unity and reflect on the issue would be more appropriate. Even if there were two eucharists, as provided for in the guidelines normally followed for eucharists at ecumenical meetings, some people still felt unable to participate.

While Dr Blei understood the decision of the Worship Committee not to have a common eucharist celebration, it was a painful thing for him to feel excluded from the Lord's Table. He appreciated the suggestion of an all-night vigil, but felt this was not an adequate response to the problem.

Dr Tanner also understood the reason for the AWC's recommendation, but she recognised too how much it would mean for those whose daily discipline is to be nurtured by the eucharist to be asked not to hold one on the Sunday during the assembly. If this were to happen, extreme care must be taken to help one another fully to comprehend the different understandings that our churches hold regarding eucharistic discipline: it is easy to misunderstand or misrepresent one another's positions. While there are those who do not have an open eucharist, and those who have clear reasons to maintain an open table, there are many different positions between the two.

Dr Turner could not envision an assembly where there was no eucharist. Yet he was aware of the divisions within the life of the churches and agreed with Dr Tanner that this offered opportunity to educate one another on why we are separated at the eucharistic table. He pleaded for reconsideration of the proposal.

Although coming from a tradition that does not use sacraments, Barbara Bazett witnessed also to the pain of separation when all cannot partake together at an assembly. The pain and divisions were so real: where else can we go for healing and wholeness but to the presence of God? She would regret the lack of an Orthodox celebration also, because there she became particularly aware that at some deep level, if we are individually in Christ, we are all in unity with one another, even if we cannot participate fully. She felt that the pain of that reality was preferable to retreating into the pain of separation. She likewise called on the AWC to reexamine its decision.

Bishop Amos (Omojunbi) also expressed his unhappiness at the proposal of the Worship Committee, saying that it is the Lord himself who invites us to his table, having repented of our sins. He felt this proposal should be reviewed as there would be nothing to celebrate after 50 years if we could have no eucharist. This was reiterated by Dr Lodberg, who protested that it would be very sad if, for the first time in 50 years, there were no eucharist during an assembly. He felt it would be honest to accept pain as the essence of why we are here.

Dr Larsson suggested that, rather than envisaging such a step backwards, a vigil be planned in preparation for the eucharist as proposed; participants could then celebrate the eucharist in different places, and return together afterwards.

In connection with any vigil that is planned, Ms Jägers asked that it be above all a time set apart for prayer and devotions. It was regrettable that the vigil for peace in Canberra lacked the element of silence. Secondly, she asked that an area be set aside for the duration of the assembly where participants could draw apart in silence whenever they wished.

Metr. Chrysostomos agreed with Dr Tsetsis that the eucharist is the supreme expression of our patristic faith. Consequently, for the Orthodox the eucharist presupposes unity in the faith and truth of the gospel. In the WCC we have to work to attain such unity in faith and truth and only then can we celebrate the eucharist together. Further, some Orthodox today believed that, because of the theological and ecclesiological differences between Orthodox and other Christian

confessions, they should not even participate in common prayer. This was another matter for reflection.

Metr. Athanasios pointed out that members of Central Committee all represented their churches. Those of other confessions in the WCC were aware that the Orthodox were not able to celebrate the eucharist together with others, yet they continued to be subjected to criticism. He pleaded for some understanding that the Orthodox could not be expected to act regardless of the theology of their own churches, whatever may be decided about a eucharist at the assembly.

Bishop Timotheos spoke of the Ethiopian tradition which requires careful preparation and a period of fasting before members may receive Holy Communion. We can be in solidarity with those of other confessions, but that cannot be compared with Holy Communion.

Metr. Kirill appreciated the courageous stance of the Worship Committee as this could not have been an easy decision. The purpose of the ecumenical movement and the WCC was to seek the unity of the church and to express it. We have become used to a certain consensus among ourselves, with votes demonstrating a certain unity. But when we express our unity, are we really in unity? We can be joyful together so we think we are united. But in reality, and to our profound regret, we are not united – in spite of 50 years of the WCC we still face the scandal of division. The fact that we suffer pain means we are trying to be healed in order not to feel more pain. This recommendation compels us to understand that today we are not in unity, but must do all we can to overcome our disunity.

With regard to the celebrations of the Lima Liturgy at Vancouver and Canberra, Metr. Kirill felt that the fact that some Orthodox took part only created an illusion that we are one; when we come to the eucharist we are separated but try to hide the fact. Rather, our liturgical practice should reflect reality. The fact of not having a common eucharist at Harare will be a profoundly painful experience for many, but this pain would help us move along towards unity so that in the future we indeed may be one. But that, he believed, would not be at a WCC assembly but at a Universal Council of the One Catholic and Apostolic Church.

Fr Kishkovsky believed it was not a matter of positive and negative signs, but we should speak rather of truthful and sober signs. We cannot deny that we are facing serious difficulties as an ecumenical fellowship, but there have been many positive achievements which should be welcomed. It was untenable that after

50 years we were still divided, with new divisions emerging. It was not a sense of optimism that was needed but a sense of repentance and return to God: only then can we rejoice in hope and give a sign of hope to the world.

Bishop Talbert held the opposite view, believing that the Table of the Lord is not divided – it is one. When will we be ready to follow the way God is planning for us? We must respond to the gift of God in Jesus Christ. If we cannot share the breaking of bread together, why do we not declare that openly and allow for people to partake at different places and then return and complete the liturgy together? God is calling us as WCC to say that the table of the Lord is there for all who want to come.

Ms Kristen Williams suggested that to have two tables would be closer to unity than none at all, and would help educate each other about our differences.

Bishop Krusche agreed with Metr. Chrysostomos that we do not speak clearly on central faith issues. He shared many of the reservations expressed about a common celebration of the eucharist, for we are indeed not yet one. But his conclusion was the opposite to that of the AWC: an assembly should find a way of celebrating Holy Communion at least for those who have reached the point where they can do so without discriminating against those who have not reached that point. For him, Holy Communion was a meal on the way to a goal until Christ comes again.

Dr Kässmann felt that the «eucharistic vision» of Vancouver was being forgotten – a sign of real sharing, trying to bring together the traditions of faith and order with those of church and society. If there were no eucharistic celebration at Harare, this would for her be a sign of resignation, forgetting that we have something that can unite us beyond all our limits.

Discussion on the Assembly in general

Dr Patelos hoped this assembly would be different from previous ones – that it would attempt to show where we have come over the past 50 years, and what we are looking forward to in the future. It must be flexible in its structures and allow for wide participation, bearing in mind past experiences.

Bishop Ambrosius believed the assembly should deal in a profound way with the theme in terms of the CUV process and the Jubilee and that these should be reflected in the continuing work. Not only must we offer thanks to the Triune God for his guidance over the past 50 years, but we must discover new ways

to put into practice in our respective churches and in our lives what we have already achieved in the WCC. Though we must not be dominated by financial difficulties, there should be strict limits to the numbers of participants in each category, and perhaps a shorter assembly than is planned at present.

Metr. Chrysostomos affirmed that the Church of Greece had become progressively more disappointed by recent assemblies, which in his view expressed the current crisis of the ecumenical movement; to avoid a repeat of this he urged that the negative points be analysed as well as the positive ones in order to improve the image of the ecumenical movement. There should be greater emphasis on the quality of the bible studies and meditations, which should be led by competent people. He did not consider it necessary to have so many committees, nor to have such a variety of categories of participants. And the assembly should be shorter.

With regard to the public event to include a «re-commitment» by the heads of member churches, Dr Wilkens wondered how many of these persons would in fact be present. And would this not result in a mainly masculine and probably elderly gathering of people who do not necessarily represent the whole people of God? If this were to be a real commitment and not just a symbolic gesture, and if the churches were to be bound by it, it implied that those undertaking the act of commitment should have a clear mandate from their respective churches; this would mean some advance preparation in the churches.

Dr Walker-Smith was concerned to include some participation by children and asked that a special programme for them be mentioned in the planning. Secondly, she wondered whether, in the 50 years celebration, some recognition could be given to those who had previously been closely involved with the ecumenical movement and the WCC as former members of committees and commissions. Finally, she pointed out that no stories of women were incorporated into the bible study material.

For Dr Kässmann, the importance of an assembly and what distinguished it from other large gatherings lay in the fact that it is the leadership body of the ecumenical movement, and for this reason it is important for delegates and those in leadership roles to be well prepared for their task.

Ms Paulin hoped that discussions on the Decade of the Churches in Solidarity with Women and women's issues in general would not be restricted to the second phase but be raised throughout the assembly. Remembering the incident at Canberra, she expressed concern about the security of women.

Several speakers underlined the need to give careful consideration to the election process and how this could be carried out in a way that caused fewer tensions, perhaps by incorporating some preparatory work in the regions.

Reference was made to the suggestion that ways be sought to link future assemblies of various ecumenical bodies to avoid the costs of organising so many world gatherings.

Discussion regarding seat allocations

Several points were raised, including the following:

- May 1996 was rather early for naming delegates; November 1996 would be a more realistic date.
- One category of delegates that tended to be forgotten was that of laymen: we must ensure that some are present at Harare.
- The present allocation tended to be unfair to united churches, since they have fewer delegates than if they had remained separate.

Metropolitan Kirill questioned the methodology for working out how many delegates a church is eligible for in relation to its membership statistics. He felt that larger churches were disadvantaged by the present scale, though he did not contest the 25 seats allocated to the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC). The fact remained that the ROC has 100 million members and should be eligible for a greater number of delegates. He asked that his remark be recorded in the minutes.

Situation in Zimbabwe

Dr Blei expressed concern about press reports that President Mugabe of Zimbabwe had made some outspoken remarks against homosexuality. What would this attitude mean for the Assembly? Responding, the General Secretary recalled his action following the meeting in Johannesburg which resulted in an assurance from the Minister of Home Affairs that all delegates invited by the WCC would be granted entry to the country. Now that the concern had been revived, it would be necessary to seek further responses from the Zimbabwean authorities and specify again the understandings reached so far regarding the essential requirements that must be met if we are to hold the assembly in Harare. Consultation had taken place with the ZCC leadership and a memorandum of understanding was being drawn up for agreement with the Zimbabwe government.

Dr Raiser assured Central Committee that he had no reason to believe that such an understanding could not be reached, but the controversy around the issue and

its implications for societies and churches would not be easily resolved. The homosexuality issue raised numerous questions about human rights, human dignity, discrimination, and about the ways we communicate with one another across cultural divides. We cannot avoid these questions but it is our common judgement that we are not yet ready to face them openly together. A process of searching for ways to respond to these challenges, which respect the differences of conviction within the fellowship, had begun, and Dr Raiser expressed the hope that this process be allowed to mature. The fundamental issues regarding homosexuality should be kept separate from the specific questions that need to be answered in order for us to go in good faith to Zimbabwe.

Ms Thompson was grateful for this explanation, and she urged that there be a firm commitment to standing in solidarity with people in Zimbabwe whose human rights were being denied because of discrimination. She wondered whether public action would be allowed to demonstrate our solidarity. Ms Mapanao stressed the understanding of the church as an inclusive community, which she understood to mean the inclusion of all God's people. In other words, no one is excluded.

Summing up, Bishop Jonson, speaking on behalf of the APC and the Worship Committee, expressed gratitude for all the comments made. Having heard no real objections, he assured Central Committee that the APC had done its utmost to shorten the assembly, both for programmatic and financial reasons. It was the hope that many heads of churches would be included among the delegates, including men and women, as well as older persons and youth. The Common Understanding and Vision (CUV) process would indeed be very central, and it was hoped that some kind of liturgical text could be produced for use in an Act of Recommitment.

The election process had not yet been considered by the APC but members were aware of the difficulties and the pain experienced by many in the past.

Bishop Jonson was surprised by the attention given to the anticipated recommendation by the Assembly Worship Committee, which had yet to be considered by the APC. The discussion had been important in bringing to the surface a concern that is at the heart of everyone present; clearly we need to continue the struggle together and try to find ways of expressing the unity we have in Christ without hiding the disunity and the problems we have. He promised that the APC would come back to Central Committee on these questions.

Bishop Okullu closed the session with prayer:

II. Report of the Assembly Planning Committee (APC)

At a later session, Ms Gcabashe presented the report of the General Secretariat Committee which had considered matters related to the Eighth Assembly. It had dealt first with the report of the APC, the substance of which appears below.

In taking up its work in preparation for the Eighth Assembly, the Assembly Planning Committee (APC) had met twice in the period following its appointment by Central Committee in January 1994. Its first meeting was held in Geneva in September 1994, and the second in Harare, Zimbabwe, in May 1995. The Committee had established good relationships and was working with enthusiasm towards the Assembly in 1998.

The APC received a number of papers prepared by staff to facilitate its work: on the theme, bible studies, the nature and style of an assembly, and on preparatory processes.

A. Theme

The Central Committee, at its meeting in January 1994, asked the Executive Committee, «on the advice of the APC, to prepare a definitive proposal for the Assembly theme, for subsequent confirmation by Central Committee by postal vote» (CC Minutes, p.85).

Accordingly, the APC submitted to the September 1994 meeting of the Executive a recommendation for a theme, which however was not adopted. The Executive Committee decided to propose the theme «*Turn to God – Rejoice in Hope*», which was subsequently confirmed by Central Committee by postal vote.

At its second meeting, the APC received, considered and re-drafted a document prepared by staff; this was submitted to Central Committee as a foundation document on the explication of the theme⁸.

B. Bible Studies

At its first meeting, the APC recommended to the General Secretary:

- that staff begin the preparation of Bible study materials as soon as the theme was confirmed;

⁸ Papers prepared for the APC – «Reflections on the Theme» and «Meditations and Bible Studies» - are available on request from the Eighth Assembly Office.

- that the materials
 - * be easily accessible to congregations,
 - * be sensitive to cultural diversity,
 - * use audio-visual material to reach a greater number of people, and
 - * include liturgical material.

At its second meeting, the APC received a staff working document and gave overall approval to Bible Studies, presented in three parts:

- a. Six biblical-theological meditations on the theme «Turn to God – Rejoice in Hope»;
- b. Seven Bible studies on some of the issues that have occupied the attention of the WCC during the past years and are likely to be the foci at the Assembly;
- c. Theme-related reflections on the passages prescribed in the Orthodox Calendar over the period of Lent, especially on the motifs of «turning to God» and «rejoicing in the Hope that is in us».

In view of the need for the studies to be available to the churches by mid-1996, the APC asked staff to begin the preparation of the material.

C. Venue

At its meeting in January 1994, the Central Committee resolved that the Eighth Assembly be held in Harare, Zimbabwe.

When the national churches and the Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC) invited the World Council of Churches (WCC) to hold its Eighth Assembly in Harare they were confident that the Harare International Conference Centre (HICC), with its modern facilities, and additional external facilities at the Polytechnic and Belvedere Teachers' College, provided the ideal location to hold the event. The APC found this not to be the case as far as accommodation was concerned.

Facilities for an assembly based on the Harare Conference Centre:

- a. In researching possible sites, the HICC, together with the adjacent halls and colleges, were found to be adequate for the Assembly and related programmes. A tent or other alternative place for worship might be required.
- b. Regarding residential accommodation, official participants (delegates, advisers, guests, staff, stewards, etc) for whom the WCC has direct responsibility to assure housing, number approximately 2,000. A further 1,500-2,000 persons might require accommodation. The WCC has some responsibility to assure accommodation for those people with reasonable access to the assembly sites.

Investigations showed that, if all participants were to be accommodated, all available rooms would have to be double occupancy of very different standards and many participants would require transport to and from the HICC. This would also imply problems with regard to personal security.

- c. Catering: As the HICC does not have catering facilities, marquees would have to be erected and outside caterers contracted.

Facilities for an assembly based at the University of Zimbabwe

In light of the residential accommodation available in the proximity of the HICC and the need for additional accommodation, staff again visited Harare and inspected the University facilities, situated in a well kept, shady and compact campus.

- a. Facilities for the assembly and assembly-related programmes: The University has a main auditorium seating 3,000+ cinema style, 2,000+ seated at tables, which could serve as a Plenary Hall (no interpretation facilities), as well as numerous lecture theatres (seating 250-500) and classrooms; plus other adequate facilities;
- b. Residential accommodation: The University has student accommodation of 4,000 beds (3,000 if rooms are used as «singles») with shared bath and toilet facilities. The city hotels are 15 minutes drive from the campus and could be used by participants who do not wish to use student accommodation.
- c. Catering: The University can cater for more than 5,000 persons in adequately equipped dining rooms.
- d. Security: The campus is well contained and security of both persons and goods would be more easily provided and managed.
- e. Budget implications: Costs had not yet been negotiated but indications were that use of the University campus for the Assembly would be of financial benefit to the Council.

Following full consideration of the advantages and disadvantages of the options of the HICC and supplementary facilities or the University campus, the APC unanimously recommended that the assembly be held at the University of Zimbabwe.

D. Dates

If the recommendation that the Assembly be held at the University were accepted, this would imply a change in the dates proposed by the Executive Committee: «that the Eighth Assembly be held from 24th August to 7th

September 1998». In order to fit in with the University dates, the APC was recommending that the Eighth Assembly be held 10-22 September 1998.

E. Style and Structure of the Assembly

• *Introduction*

At its first meeting, the APC received a paper which drew on the work of the Assembly Reflection Group of the Executive Committee and began to consider alternative ways to provide more opportunities for various constituencies to engage in the life of the Assembly. The following general directions were affirmed and subsequently reported to the Executive Committee in September 1994:

- a. delegates should be given adequate time and space to fulfil the constitutional mandates without being overwhelmed by the immediate presence of large numbers of other participants;
- b. plans should include a Visitors' Programme while ensuring (a) above;
- c. the nature and structure of the Assembly should reflect the fruits of the Ecumenical Decade of Churches on Solidarity with Women;
- d. appropriate place should be found within the programme of the Assembly to commemorate and celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the WCC;
- e. a period should be included when churches are called to renew their ecumenical commitment; the leadership of the churches should be invited to be part of this re-commitment;
- f. the act of re-commitment should be related to the «Common Understanding and Vision» process;
- g. the value of small groups, especially for Bible study in relation to the theme.

At its second meeting, the APC further developed the affirmed directions.

• *Purpose and Functions of an Assembly*

The assembly is the primary governing and decision-making body of the WCC; all other governing instruments like the Central and Executive Committees and the commissions receive their mandates and authority from the assembly. Therefore, gathering the delegates and enabling them to make the necessary decisions are at the heart of the organisation of an assembly.

- *Delegates are required to accomplish three basic constitutional functions:*
 - review the work done over the previous seven years;
 - decide on the programmatic priorities for the subsequent seven years;
 - elect the Presidents and the CC to govern the affairs of the Council for the next period.

- *The meeting of churches across such diversity of cultural and confessional traditions is an opportunity that calls for several other expressions. These traditionally have included :*
 - celebration in worship of the unity churches have in Christ;
 - reflection and conversation on some of the fundamental issues that churches face as churches at the historical moment of the meeting;
 - an attempt to articulate the mind of the churches on social, economic, political and spiritual issues that confront humankind;
 - opportunities to share stories, to raise issues, to express solidarity and to make common commitments, etc.

- *The structure of recent assemblies had, among others, six major streams that attempted to meet these expectations:*
 - well prepared daily and special acts of worship;
 - small group meetings for bible study and reflection;
 - sections that helped prepare the work of the assembly in relation to programme priorities;
 - committees that prepared the business aspects of the assembly;
 - meeting in deliberative plenaries designed for specific purposes;
 - business plenaries that received an accounting of the work done over the past seven years (reports of the General Secretary and the Moderator), set priorities for the coming years (Programme Guidelines Committee), spoke the mind of the churches on public issues (Public Issues Committee), elected the Presidents and the Central Committee (Nominations Committee), and set policies for the relationships of the WCC (Policy Reference).

- *Some of the problems encountered in this structure were:*
 - many delegates found the assembly rather complex, being asked to belong at the same time to several groupings (such as small groups, clusters, sections, sub-sections, committees, plenary sessions), which had varying levels of authority and different styles of functioning;
 - delegates come with different degrees of understanding of and involvement in the ongoing work of the WCC, leading to tension in the work of sections, sub-sections, committees, etc, between those perceived to be «informed» or «like-minded» and less experienced participants;
 - those who do not find a space within the agreed assembly agenda to air their issues or to raise their concerns may attempt to do so by misusing plenary or section time or by protesting at the margins of the assembly;
 - the business plenaries have assumed the proportions of «public events» because of the large number of visitors who witness the proceedings and at

times exercise influence from the margins. The delegates find it difficult to be more «business like» in the business they have to do.

- *The question of the Visitors' Programme at the Assembly*

The core of the assembly, composed of the delegates, has always been surrounded by other categories of participants. Among these are visitors who have no official standing with the assembly. The category of «visitors» has been on the increase in recent assemblies and those responsible for the planning have had to apply limits and national quotas to have an equitable distribution of places and to maintain some reasonable proportion between the official participants and the visitors. Since the official programme of the assembly is not open to all visitors (for lack of space), a well organised parallel programme has been offered.

In this respect it is important to recognize that since the churches are entitled to very small delegations, much of the leadership in the churches, ecumenically involved and committed persons, WCC commission members, staff of other ecumenical organisations, etc, attend the assembly as visitors. They play an important role in the wider ecumenical movement. The Visitors' Programme also is the main vehicle for participation of the local churches in the nation and region in which the assembly is held.

The APC agreed that a Visitors' Programme (VP) be included in planning for the Assembly but noted the need to reflect further on the critical relationship between the «official assembly» (the work of the delegates) and the VP.

- *A five-part structure for the Eighth Assembly*

Taking into consideration the above, as well as evaluations of past assemblies, the Assembly Reflection Group of the Executive Committee had made a proposal for a «four part assembly» which was received by the APC and discussed, and which had been further developed by staff and by the APC.

The APC recommended five distinct phases in the life of the assembly which would have different levels of participation and authority.

Phase I: Gathering

The first few days of the Assembly when the delegates gather, with other categories of participants, including visitors, to «open» the assembly, do initial business and receive the reports of the General Secretary and the Moderator, to elect assembly committees, to receive greetings and deal with other general business.

Arrangements for this phase must ensure that delegates have the necessary space and time for the reception of reports and other business.

Phase II: Conferring

This constitutes what has been described as the «open space» or «market place». It would be the period when delegates would participate in programmes organized with a view to guiding the work of the WCC for the next seven years, and in other offerings of general interest in which both delegates and other participants might participate according to their choice.

Hearings

Instead of the Sections of past assemblies where delegates were asked to discuss specific issues and produce agreed Section reports, delegates would be requested to participate in «Hearings» based on the work of the four Programme Units of the Council: Unity and Renewal, Churches in Mission, Justice, Peace and Creation, Sharing and Service.

The delegates participating in these four hearings (designated according to personal choice and interest) would have opportunity to:

- hear what have been the priorities of the Units in the past seven years;
- learn what programme directions are in place as they meet in assembly;
- comment and seek clarification on the work that has been done;
- bring to attention matters that are of concern to their churches in the area of the work of the Unit;
- offer suggestions on what might be the future orientation of the Unit in terms of issues to be dealt with, the methodology of its work, and its communication and dissemination of information to the constituency.

Unlike the Section work of the past where issues were dealt with without reference to the existing structures and ongoing work in the units, the Assembly would be able to determine priorities in the context of the ongoing work. The proposal offers the possibility to review, criticise and propose priorities that can be assimilated and followed up.

It is proposed that these four hearings do not attempt to produce reports of their own for the whole assembly or the Programme Guidelines Committee (PGC). Rather, it is suggested that members of the PGC (appointed in Phase I) divide into groups of «listeners» in the four Unit hearings and the rest of the Open Space. Towards the end of Phase II the listeners would come together and draw up proposals on issues and concerns raised and how they might be followed up in the future work of the units, for submission to the Assembly for decision.

Open Space

During Phase II, in addition to the four Unit Hearings, other programmes and activities would be organised for visitors. When the delegates are not in the Hearings they too would participate in the wider offerings of the Open Space.

The «open space» stems from the realisation that it is not possible to find space within a fixed assembly programme to accommodate all the issues, concerns and interests that the churches and groups would like to place before the Assembly or to have the sustained debates and discussions that these issues call for.

Such a space also would avoid the need to prepare virtually two assembly programmes (one for official participants and another for visitors) and give the possibility of using a variety of methodologies in the life of the Assembly. It also would allow all participants to have some choice in how they would spend at least part of the time at the Assembly.

The proposed «open space» has the following strengths:

- for the delegates, it combines «organized time» (in Hearings and Committee work) with «optional time» so that no one is weighed down by the pressure of two weeks of highly structured programme;
- it provides «officially sanctioned» and yet not «officially stamped» opportunity for several issues to be brought before participants in the assembly and discussed;
- it provides for a wide range of programme activities of the Council to be heard, so that no one programme unit needs to struggle to find a space within the official programme;
- it allows for a variety of issues to be discussed, without the pressure to have to arrive at agreed reports;
- it could, by breaking down the barrier between official delegates, visitors and members of local churches at one phase of the Assembly, provide the «atmosphere» of a genuine gathering of churches to mark the 50th Anniversary of the WCC.

Other committee work (e.g. Finance Committee, Nominations Committee) would also be undertaken during Phase II.

In summary, Phase II would have the following components, with different constituencies, content, functions and purposes:

- *Four Hearings*, based on the work of the Units and with the primary purpose to review programmes and to set future directions. The hearings would be primarily for delegates who would be allocated to groups on the basis of indicated personal choice and interest.
- *The work of the Programme Guidelines Committee (PGC)* facilitated
 - from the hearings, by a «listening group» appointed from the membership of the PGC,
 - by prior work, with recommendations, from the outgoing Central Committee,
 - by the reports of the Moderator and the General Secretary.
- *The work of other committees (Finance, Nominations, Policy Reference, etc).*

An Open Space, open to all participants, and including worship, bible studies in small groups, speakers on the history of the ecumenical movement, public issues of our time (e.g. Africa, the local context), programme-related issues (e.g. Ecumenical Decade), regional and confessional meetings, and many alternative programmes.

Phase III: Deciding

For delegates only, deliberation on the Common Understanding and Vision.

In considering ways of receiving and celebrating the CUV process and its culmination in the Assembly, the APC noted that one possible outcome of the current process in the member churches could include the need for amendments to the Constitution. One full day of deliberation on actions by the Assembly should be allowed for this.

Phase IV: Committing

A public event in which the 50th Anniversary of the WCC is celebrated; the heads of the member churches would be present and participate in the appropriation, perhaps within a service of worship, of an «Ecumenical Common Understanding and Vision»; and make a commitment to the ecumenical movement as we face a new millennium.

Phase V: Deciding

Primarily for delegates in order to discuss and act on the reports of the Programme Guidelines, Nominations, Public Issues and Policy Reference committees.

Plenaries

The APC has identified two issues on which it is recommending a deliberative plenary session be held. It plans to give further consideration to the need or otherwise for further plenary sessions at its next meeting.

Other elements/work for consideration

The Committee noted for further consideration how the work of the two major WCC world conferences held between 1991 and 1998 might be presented at the Assembly; it will report on this to Central Committee in 1996.

Local churches

- The APC noted the need for time to be scheduled for a «presentation» by local churches.
- The APC affirmed the value of *visits to parishes*, but also noted difficulties experienced at past assemblies in organising such visits, some delegates withdrawing at the last minute, insufficient delegates or other assembly participants available for the parishes requesting visitors, changed travel arrangements, etc.
- The APC agreed that visits to parishes should be arranged for delegates and others wishing to participate in such a programme, but that these be limited to the greater Harare area, arranged for participants in groups rather than on an individual basis, and be restricted to a Sunday morning until 14.00hrs.

F. Visitors' Programme

The APC is aware of the need for clarification of the nature of any Visitors' Programme and of the relationship and participation of visitors in the «Open Space» of the Assembly, with particular emphasis on who may participate in debate. The APC has asked staff to do some preparatory work with some initial proposals, taking into consideration decisions of this Central Committee on the style and structure of the Assembly, for discussion at its next meeting.

G. Worship

The APC has affirmed the centrality of worship in the life of the Assembly and has offered some thoughts to the Assembly Worship Committee (AWC) for consideration in its work:

It expressed the hope that the worship at Harare might include regular daily evening/closing prayer. It also asked the AWC to give consideration to issues relating to «open» and «closed» eucharists at the Assembly and how worship might recognise the reality of the position in a sensitive way.

The Assembly Worship Committee held its first meeting in July 1995, and would report back to the APC at its meeting in June 1996.

H. Pre-Assembly Events

Noting and affirming the general agreement on the importance of the events related to youth and women, which have the primary purpose of preparing the specific constituencies to participate fully in the Assembly, the APC:

- accepted in principle the need to facilitate pre-Assembly meetings for women and youth;
- agreed that the pre-Assembly events be held between 6-8 September 1998;
- acknowledged the need for further preparatory meetings (e.g. Orthodox meeting, regional meetings) and asked that staff submit specific proposals to its next meeting.

The Committee affirmed the need for one clear day immediately preceding the opening for the preparation of leadership for the Assembly.

I. Preparatory Process

The APC noted the following elements in the preparatory processes towards the Assembly for further development by staff and consideration at its next meeting.

Preparation of delegates

- by early identification, including those appointed under the 15% category, to facilitate full participation;

Preparation of member churches

- at all levels – leadership and congregational membership;
- by communication from the WCC (giving examples of how local churches can prepare for the Assembly; advising the Theme for bible study; providing liturgical material; encouraging churches to include the Jubilee and the CUV process in their preparation for the Assembly; seeking feedback from the churches on issues identified by them).

Regional preparation

- seeking co-operation of regional councils in the preparatory process;
- seeking regional information from Africa, especially on interfaith relationships; the economic and political situation; a positive image of Africa; and the life of the Church;
- seeking funding for regional meetings.

Team visits

- were affirmed but further consideration of models and timing is required.

J. Communication

The APC received an outline of proposals on communication at each of its meetings and offered comments to the Communications Office for further development.

At its second meeting, the APC discussed the most appropriate style, format and time of production of worship materials, both for the Assembly and for wider circulation, and has sought the views of the AWC on this matter.

The APC endorsed a draft communication plan proposed; this would be developed further prior to the APC's next meeting.

K. Differently Abled Persons

The APC noted and affirmed the hope of the staff task group on Differently Abled Persons that the issues of the differently abled be visible in every part of the life of the Assembly.

The APC agreed:

- that the following issues relating to differently abled persons be an element in the Hearings at the Assembly:
 - * inclusive community
 - * theological dimensions (including «disabled»/»differently abled»)
 - * practical concerns (including economic justice)
 - * the human rights dimension, and
 - * preventative measures (e.g. land mines issues, health measures);
- that signing for the hearing impaired be provided at the Assembly;
- that churches with larger delegations be encouraged to include differently abled persons in their delegation;
- that issues relating to the Differently Abled be included in all other appropriate aspects of the Assembly.

L. Elections

To date, the APC had not given consideration to possible alternative election processes and had asked that staff do some preparatory work on this matter for consideration at the next meeting.

M. Local Committee

The APC received a report from the Local Committee (appointed by the Zimbabwe Council of Churches) outlining processes and activities to date, the proposed structure and responsibilities of working groups, and the proposed local budget. It noted with appreciation the initial planning and the work done.

Action by Central Committee

The General Secretariat Committee *recommended* that Central Committee endorse the following recommendations proposed by the Assembly Planning Committee:

1. *that the document «Turn to God – Rejoice in Hope: Reflections on the Eighth Assembly theme» be received as a foundation document on the explication of the theme;*
2. *that the Eighth Assembly be held at the University of Zimbabwe;*
3. *that the dates of the Eighth Assembly be 10-22 September 1998;*
4. *that the Assembly*
 - a. *– be held in five phases:*

Phase I Gathering

including Opening Actions (appropriate greetings, election of committees), Reports of the Moderator and General Secretary, with adequate time for discussion of those reports.

Phase II Conferring including

- 1.(i) *4 Unit Hearings, primarily for delegates (designated to groups on basis of choice) with a view to review programmes and to set future directions.*
- (ii) *The work of the Programme Guidelines Committee on programme priorities be facilitated by input from the outgoing Central Committee, the reports of the General Secretary and Moderator and by a listening process at the Unit Hearings.*
- (iii) *The work of other committees.*
2. *Open Space, open to all participants, and including worship, bible studies in small groups, offerings on ecumenical history, public issues, regional and confessional meetings, and many alternative programmes.*

Phase III Deciding

for delegates only,

- *deliberation on the Common Understanding and Vision.*

Phase IV Committing

for all participants, leadership of all member churches and open to the leadership of non-member churches and organisations; including

- *50th Anniversary celebrations;*
- *liturgical appropriation of the Common Understanding and Vision;*
- *commitment to an ecumenical vision for the future.*

Phase V Deciding

primarily for delegates,

- *in order to carry out the constitutional functions of setting priorities for the next seven years, electing the Presidents and Central Committee, any other business,*
- *closing service.*

- b. – *provide opportunity for special plenary presentations on:*
 - i) *the Ecumenical Decade of the Churches in Solidarity with Women,*
 - ii) *issues facing the continent of Africa.*
- c. – *provide opportunity for those participants in the Assembly wishing to attend Sunday morning worship with local congregations, in groups, limited to the greater Harare area.*

The Central Committee **adopted** these recommendations.

The General Secretariat Committee further recommended approval of the following recommendations:

- 5. *that the APC bring specific proposals to the next meeting of Central Committee to ensure a better procedure for electing the new Central Committee;*
- 6. *that the discussion in the plenary session (reported above) of Central Committee on the tentative proposal that there be no celebration of the Eucharist at the Eighth Assembly be referred back to the Assembly Worship Committee and the Assembly Planning Committee for further consideration with a view to bringing a firm recommendation to the next meeting of Central Committee.*

The Central Committee **agreed** to these recommendations.

III. Allocation of Seats for Delegates to the Eighth Assembly

The General Secretariat Committee had reviewed the proposals of the Executive Committee regarding the principles on which the allocation of seats was based, the goals for the Eighth Assembly, and the criteria for the composition of delegations, as follows:

1. Introduction

Following each assembly and prior to the next one, the process of allocation of seats for delegates to the next assembly is reviewed and considered.

In September 1993, the Executive Committee commenced consideration of the allocations of seats for the Eighth Assembly, and began by exploring options which might assist in achieving the desired balances within each delegation. The Committee also felt that it was desirable that the heads of all member churches be present at the Assembly.

Following further consideration by both the Executive and Central Committees in January 1994, the Central Committee agreed «on the following guidelines as the basis for further research and consultation with member churches on the allocation of seats at the Eighth Assembly:

- a) The allocation of seats to member churches should reflect the realities of WCC membership (size, regions, confessions, diaspora membership, etc).
- b) The heads of member churches should be encouraged to participate in the assembly as delegates of their churches.
- c) In order to ensure an inclusive and balanced assembly the following goals should be established: women 50%; youth 25%; lay persons 50%; Orthodox 25%.
- d) The total number of delegates (85% + 15%) should not significantly exceed 1000.
- e) A minimum of two delegates for each member church is a goal, provided that this can be accomplished within the other established goals of representation for the Assembly.
- f) The model used for Canberra for churches with significant membership in several countries and regions should (with suitable modifications) be used again.
- g) All churches should seek to make their delegation inclusive and balanced.»

The Central Committee further agreed:

- 1) «That a detailed plan for the allocation of seats be presented to the next meetings of the Executive and Central Committees.
- 2) That this plan also include procedures for the appointment of the 15% category of delegates.
- 3) That the implications of the plan for national and regional representation and the financial implications be spelled out.»

In September 1994 the Executive Committee adopted a model to serve as the basis for the allocation, which provided for

- one seat only to churches with membership up to 25,000;
- two seats to churches with membership between 25,001 and 500,000;
- a maximum number of 25 seats per church.

The proposed model was circulated to member churches who were invited to provide up-to-date membership statistics. The model was in general well received by the churches.

2. Proposed Allocations of seats for delegates to the Eighth Assembly

2.1 The provisions of the WCC Rules regarding delegates are as follows:

- a) The Central Committee shall determine the number of delegates to the Assembly.
- b) Each member church shall be entitled to a minimum of one delegate.
- c) Member churches shall nominate and elect not less than 85% of the delegates.
- d) The Central Committee shall recommend the proper distribution within delegations among church officials, parish ministers and lay persons; and among men, women and young people.
- e) Each associate member church is entitled to elect one non-voting representative.
- f) In order to achieve proper balances, a further number of delegates, not more than 15% of the total number, shall be elected by selected member churches upon nomination of the Central Committee following consultation with the churches.
- g) Central Committee members who are not appointed as delegates by their churches are entitled to attend the assembly as retiring members with the right to speak but not to vote.

2.2 Policy for proposals for the Eighth Assembly

a) *Membership figures*

The compilation and comparison of membership statistics of member churches is complex. The manner of counting and recording of members varies from church to church and an equitable recording is difficult.

As was done for the Seventh Assembly and recognising the differences in recording methods, for those churches which count only communicant or adult members, the membership number has been doubled to give a more comparative figure.

The detailed proposals submitted are based on statistics provided by member churches. For those churches for which no current figures are available, the membership figure is that used for the Seventh Assembly.

b) *Churches with substantial membership in several countries and regions*

Some churches which have their headquarters or main see in one country also have substantial membership in local churches or jurisdictions in other parts of the world. These are not independent churches and are not eligible to join the WCC. This applies particularly to the Orthodox churches and to some Anglican and Methodist churches.

For the Seventh Assembly, principles were developed to ensure that the full membership of those churches was adequately represented. This was achieved by allocating seats to the respective member church in each region, rather than to the global membership. The same principles were included in the model as adopted. The scale applied to determine the number of delegates per diaspora community is basically the same as for member churches, with the following modifications:

- no delegate for diaspora communities of less than 25,000;
- one delegate for communities between 25,001 and 50,000.

c) *United churches*

The Rules of the WCC provide that in determining the allocation of seats, attention shall be given to «the special importance of united churches». Unless special criteria are applied, a united church may have less delegates than the total of the delegates to an assembly that the separate churches would have had prior to union.

The principle that a recently united church should not have less delegates to an assembly than the total of delegates the separate churches would have had prior to union is affirmed and churches which have merged since the Seventh Assembly, whether inter- or intra-confessional, will have the

same number of delegates as they would have had according to the scale for allocation of seats to the Eighth Assembly as separate churches.

d) *Scale of allocation*

The model adopted by the Executive Committee September 1994 as the basis for the proposal now submitted provides for one seat only to member churches with membership under 25,000; two seats to each member church with membership between 25,001 and 500,000; and a maximum of 25 delegates per member church.

The full scale of the allocation formula appears below:

Membership		Number of Seats per Church
1	25.000	1
25.001	500.000	2
500.001	1.000.000	3
1.000.001	1.500.000	4
1.500.001	2.500.000	5
2.500.001	3.500.000	6
3.500.001	5.000.000	7
5.000.001	6.500.000	8
6.500.001	8.000.000	9
8.000.001	9.500.000	10
9.500.001	11.000.000	11
11.000.001	12.500.000	12
12.500.001	14.000.000	13
14.000.001	15.500.000	14
15.500.001	17.000.000	15
17.000.001	18.500.000	16
18.500.001	20.000.000	17
20.000.001	25.000.000	18
25.000.001	30.000.000	20
more than	30.000.000	25

The scale does not apply in detail to the Orthodox, Anglican, Methodist and United churches referred to in clauses 2.2 b) and c) above because of the special principles outlined. At this time there is no church which has united since Canberra which qualifies for additional seats, but the policy should be established.

e) *Confessional, national and regional delegate groupings*

If the churches concerned desire and agree to do so, to allow flexibility in developing delegations, seat allocations may be re-distributed within confessional, national or regional groups.

f) *Detailed listing*

A list indicating the allocation of delegates for Canberra and the provisional allocation for Harare (as of September 1995), by regions/ countries in alphabetical order according to the church's name can be found in Appendix III. The total number of seats allocated is 980.

g) *Guidelines for composition of delegations*

As indicated above {§ 2.1(d)}, the Central Committee recommends the distribution within delegations.

In formulating the guidelines and goals for allocation of seats for delegates to the Eighth Assembly (January 1994), the Central Committee affirmed the principle of a fully participatory assembly. The decision (incorporated in the model adopted) that a minimum of two delegates for each member church be a goal, was based on the hope that member churches, too, would affirm the principle of a fully participatory assembly and that at least one delegate in any two-person delegation would be a woman, a young person, a lay person, or a person in more than one of those categories. The following guidelines for the composition of delegations affirm the goals established (50% women, 25% youth) and, further, in recognition of the end of the Ecumenical Decade of the Churches in Solidarity with Women, where the total number of delegates is not equally divisible by two for 50% women and 50% men, the schedule is weighted towards the participation of women.

The guidelines were for recommendation to the churches.

Note: A delegate may be counted in more than one category

Number of delegates	The delegation should include a minimum of			
	clergy	lay persons	women	youth
1	—	—	—	—
2	1	1	1	—
3	1	1	2	1
4	2	2	2	1
5	2	2	3	1
6	3	3	3	1
7	3	3	4	2
8	4	4	4	2
9	4	4	5	2
10	5	5	5	2
11	5	5	6	3
12	6	6	6	3
13	6	6	7	3
14	7	7	7	3
15	7	7	8	4
16	8	8	8	4
17	8	8	9	4
18	9	9	9	4
19	9	9	10	5
20	10	10	10	5
21	10	10	11	5
22	11	11	11	5
23	11	11	12	6
24	12	12	12	6
25	12	12	13	6

h) *Youth*

In accordance with existing WCC practice, it is proposed that youth delegates, and youth for all other categories at the Assembly, be at least 18 and not more than 30 years of age at 22 September, 1998 (that is, born between 23 September 1980 and 22 September 1967). 18-30 years of age is the normal age range for participation of youth in WCC meetings and is well understood and accepted by the churches.

i) *National groupings*

It is recommended that churches within a country be encouraged to consult with one another in order to reach the stated goals of participation in the Assembly within their national group and which might be difficult to achieve within their individual smaller delegations.

3. Selection of delegates

While it is recognised and understood that member churches have full responsibility to appoint their delegates to the Assembly, it is recommended that, in the selection of their delegates, member churches be encouraged to respond positively to the criteria for the composition of delegations, §2.2(g) above, and to give consideration to the following factors, and so assist in achieving a representative and inclusive assembly:

3.1 *Composition of delegation*

In addition to the balances specified with regard to women and youth, male lay persons, and parish clergy in their delegations and the special importance of including differently abled persons, indigenous people, and persons of racial and ethnic minorities in their allocation.

3.2 *Responsibilities of delegates*

The assembly is the supreme legislative body of the WCC and is charged with electing its leadership, reviewing its programmes and determining guidelines for its work during the coming years. Even though many other participants are present at an assembly, it is the official representatives of the churches – the delegates – who are charged with these responsibilities which are the essential business of an assembly.

In order for the assembly to carry out its tasks effectively, it is important that delegates be recognized by their churches as being sufficiently well informed to represent the thinking of their churches to the WCC and vice-versa and able to make commitments on behalf of their churches on matters that come before an assembly for decision. Delegates may well include members of governing bodies of the churches and persons in executive staff positions in their church.

The majority of delegates at past assemblies had not previously been to a WCC assembly and many had never been to any WCC meeting. Preparation of delegates is important, as recognised by the Assembly Planning Committee in its work. A balance of new delegates with those with past experience of WCC assemblies is desirable.

3.3 *Central Committee*

Members of Central Committee are elected from among the delegates at the Assembly and all delegates are eligible for election.

4. Procedures

- 4.1 The proposals as determined by this meeting of the Central Committee be sent to all member churches requesting advice of delegates by 31 May 1996 so that a report with recommendations for allocation of the 15% category can be submitted to Central Committee at its meeting in September 1996.
- 4.2 Following further determination by the Central Committee at its meeting in September 1996 of procedures for appointment of the 15% category, member churches be asked for nominations in the category so that proposals can be submitted to the Executive Committee meeting in early 1997 and the Central Committee meeting in September 1997.

Action by Central Committee

The General Secretariat Committee proposed that the following recommendations concerning the Allocation of Seats be endorsed:

1. – *that the procedures for the appointment of the 15% category of delegates to the Eighth Assembly be:*
 - a) the allocation of additional seats to Orthodox churches in order to bring the Orthodox representation up to 25% of the total;
 - b) if necessary to achieve the balances of women, youth and lay persons, as determined by the Central Committee, the allocation of an additional seat to selected churches on criteria to be determined by Central Committee; (see amendment below)
2. – *that churches which have merged since the Seventh Assembly, whether inter-or intra-confessional, shall have the same number of delegates as they would have had according to the scale for allocation of seats for delegates to the Eighth Assembly as separate churches;*
3. – *that the scale (see above) be adopted as the scale for the allocation of seats for delegates to the Eighth Assembly;*
4. – *that the allocation of seats for delegates to the Eighth Assembly for churches with substantial membership in several countries and regions (§2.2 (b) above), be approved in principle;*

5. – *that, if the churches concerned desire and agree to do so, delegate allocations within confessional, regional or national groups may be redistributed by and within those churches;*
6. – *that the seat allocations for delegates to the Eighth Assembly as detailed in Appendix III be approved in principle;*
7. – *that the «Guidelines for the composition of delegations to the Eighth Assembly» (§2.2 (g) above) be adopted for recommendation to member churches;*
8. – *that youth delegates and youth for all other categories at the Assembly, including for election to the Central Committee, be at least 18 and not more than 30 years of age at 22 September 1998 (that is, born between 23 September 1980 and 22 September 1967);*
9. – *that member churches within each country be encouraged to consult with one another in order to reach the stated goals of participation in the Assembly within their national group;*
10. – *that, in the selection of their delegates, member churches be encouraged to respond positively to the criteria for the composition of delegations (see above), and to give consideration to the factors detailed in § 3. above.*
11. – *that the following procedures for the allocation of seats for delegates to the Eighth Assembly be approved:*
 - a) *The proposals as determined by this meeting of the Central Committee be sent to all member churches requesting advice of delegates by 31 May 1996, and no later than 31 December 1996, so that a report with recommendations for allocation of the 15% category can be submitted to the Central Committee at its meeting in September 1996.*
 - b) *Following further determination by the Central Committee at its meeting in September 1996 of procedures for appointment of the 15% category, member churches be asked for nominations in the category so that proposals can be submitted to the Executive Committee meeting in early 1997 and the Central Committee meeting in September 1997.*

Ms Thompson was concerned that the 15% be used to benefit all groups concerned, not any one group above another. She proposed an amendment to recommendation 1. above which was **agreed** as follows:

1. *that the procedure for the appointment of the 15% category of delegates be used to achieve the balances of women, youth, Orthodox and lay persons as determined by Central Committee. The allocation of an additional seat to selected churches will be based on criteria to be determined by the Central Committee.*

The Central Committee **voted in favour** of these recommendations.

TOWARDS A COMMON UNDERSTANDING AND VISION OF THE WCC

An interim report⁹ had been circulated, the main points of which are summarised below. Unit Committees were encouraged to comment on the specific implications of the work of each Unit for this understanding and vision, and their suggestions were incorporated in the report of the General Secretariat Committee.

At its meeting in Geneva in February 1995, the Executive Committee endorsed the proposal of the Assembly Planning Committee that the Eighth Assembly would provide a fitting occasion to conclude the reflection process on the Common Understanding and Vision of the WCC (CUV) (Minutes, pp. 20ff). This could take the form of the adoption by the Assembly of «a statement providing a basic orientation for the life and work of the Council into the 21st century».

The question of what the WCC is and what it should do has been a continuing one from the outset. Fundamentally, the ecumenical movement has been a movement of renewal, which has implied a continuing evolution in the churches' understanding of ecumenism. When it was founded as an institutional expression of ecumenism, the WCC had no parallel; early discussions of the question of its nature were crystallized in the Central Committee's statement on *The Church, the Churches and the World Council of Churches* (Toronto, 1950). Theological discussions of the nature of the unity we seek have continued in the Faith and Order Commission and have led over the years to several declarations by governing bodies, though none of these specifically articulated a common understanding and vision of the WCC.

The churches' fellowship and collaboration on a «common calling» within the World Council inevitably underscored the need for «responsiveness» to realities and developments within the life of the churches and the world. As a result, the growth of the programmatic structure of the institution has not always been carefully coordinated. Moreover, the various engagements undertaken ecumenically encouraged participation by groups and individuals who could not

⁹ see Appendix XII – Documents available on request (no.6.7)

as such be «members» of the WCC. Again, this raises the question of how the WCC as a whole is to be understood.

As an international organization whose members are primarily national church bodies, the WCC is inevitably distant from the grassroots and the life of the members of the local parishes and congregations who make up its member churches. At the same time, the WCC has often been conceived as a frontier movement whose vocation includes posing challenges to the churches in their own life and witness. This has often meant that, among many people around the world, there have been misunderstandings of, opposition to and ignorance of what the WCC is and does. Here, too, the need to address the question of the common understanding and vision of the WCC is evident.

In addition, there were a number of particular reasons behind the long-term study of the Common Understanding and Vision of the WCC mandated by Central Committee at its meeting in Moscow in 1989. Already at that time, the dramatic changes which would soon sweep through Eastern and Central Europe and mark the end of the Cold War were beginning to be visible. The sharp debates on communism and capitalism at the Amsterdam Assembly and the reaction to these in the secular world had foreshadowed the political and ideological tensions which would shape the life of the Council for more than forty years, despite the deep and often controversial commitment to transcending these divisions in ecumenical fellowship. While the political upheavals of 1989-1990 did not alter the basis of that fellowship, it was apparent that the new era would bring radical changes to the ways in which the churches worked together at their «common calling».

At the same time, it was evident that changes in the situation of Christianity over the four decades of the Council's life — the shift in the «centre of gravity» from North to South, and the fact that where Christianity is growing rapidly it is among churches and groups with little historical contact with the institutional ecumenical movement — suggested the need for a new attempt to articulate the nature and vocation of the WCC.

A third factor urging such a study was that the decades since the WCC was founded had seen major changes in the ecumenical situation. A range of ecumenical bodies now exist which were not on the scene in 1948, and there was often unclarity about the WCC's relationship with these, and the differences and similarities in their vocations. Meanwhile, despite the proliferation of institutional expressions of ecumenism, there was growing talk of a «crisis» or «stagnation» in ecumenism and of a loss of ecumenical vision.

Finally, the call for such a study arose from internal issues having to do with difficulties in the churches in responding to the multi-faceted agenda of the WCC, their frequent criticism of a lack of coordination, undue complexity and overlap in programmes and the sense that the structure of the WCC had become too cumbersome to respond effectively to new challenges. These perceptions, along with indications of financial difficulties, had led to the proposal that the programme structure of the WCC, in place since 1971, should be reorganized. Many Central Committee members insisted that any programmatic reorganization should be accompanied by a new look at the common understanding and vision of the WCC.

In seeking a statement of a «common understanding and vision», all three terms are important. *Understanding* recognizes that what the WCC is, is not self-evident – it needs articulation and re-articulation; the point of the exercise, however, is not just to describe the current situation but to set forth a *vision* that is oriented to the future; these must be *common* expressions that can be «owned» by churches as a basis for commitment, not just a bureaucratic statement of the self-understanding of the governing bodies and staff.

Early steps in the process

Besides appointing a committee to present a «programmatic reorganization» plan, the Central Committee in Moscow 1989 asked the general secretary to set in motion a process of consultation with member churches and other ecumenical partners on what was called for the first time «the common understanding and vision of the WCC» (CUV). While Central Committee decided in March 1990 to defer any action on programmatic reorganization until after the Seventh Assembly, it urged the general secretary to convene a task force to define the process more precisely and begin preparing a study booklet for churches and other ecumenical partners.

A group of «ecumenical veterans» met with the general secretary and senior staff in August 1990 to clarify the major issues and suggest procedures for the study, but concluded that preparation of a study guide would be premature. Over the next two years, discussions were organized at the Canberra Assembly, at the first full meeting of the new Central Committee in September 1991 and at the combined meeting of commissions and advisory groups for all units and offices in Evian in May 1992. The report of the advisory group which presented the restructuring approved by the Central Committee in 1991 included a section on «The World Council of Churches: A Vision».

In September 1992 a small group of advisors and staff met to prepare the first draft of a CUV study guide for member churches and other ecumenical partners. This was completed in July 1993 and sent to member churches, members of Central Committee, associate councils, regional councils, CWCs and «friends of the WCC» with an accompanying letter from the general secretary describing it as «an effort to elicit popular perceptions with regard to the WCC, what it is and what it should be doing» and asking for responses by mid-1994.

In the next months, various groups considered the issue, and in February 1994 a small group of theologians met in Geneva to start collating the results of earlier discussions bearing on the CUV process.

At the September 1994 meetings of the Assembly Planning Committee and Executive Committee, it was proposed that approval of a major document on our ecumenical understanding and its implications for the WCC — a kind of ecumenical charter for the 21st century — should have a prominent place on the agenda of the Eighth Assembly. Thus, the staff group on CUV has subsequently oriented its work towards the Assembly; and the process was endorsed by the Executive in February 1995.

The General Secretariat Committee, having received comments from the four Unit Committees,

recommended that the interim report on The Common Vision and Understanding of the World Council of Churches be received with gratitude for the work done, and affirmed:

(a) the four focal points/major areas of enquiry that have been identified as critical for articulating a common understanding and vision of the WCC:

- the nature and task of the WCC as a «fellowship of churches»;*
- the role of the WCC within the «one ecumenical movement»;*
- forms of representation and participation in the fellowship of the WCC;*
- steps towards expressing an integrating vision of the WCC.*

For input in these areas, advice has been sought on specific questions from several different quarters, including:

1. Questions regarding the **nature** of the WCC (reviewing the Basis in the light of ecumenical discussions and agreements since 1961; looking at the 1950

Toronto Statement, especially the part setting forth «The positive assumptions which underlie the WCC»; reflecting on the ecclesial nature of the fellowship between the churches in the ecumenical movement) have been referred to the Standing Commission on Faith and Order.

2. Questions regarding the **task** of the WCC, as described in the constitutional functions (Art.III), have been referred to the commissions of each programme unit, who are being asked to look particularly at the function or functions which pertain to the unit's current work and suggest whether changes are necessary and/or how this language might be expanded upon in an «explanatory memorandum».
3. Questions regarding the **role of the WCC within the one ecumenical movement and representation and participation** have been referred to the Office of Church and Ecumenical Relations. These issues were also being dealt with by the group reviewing the meaning of and criteria for WCC membership.

(b) the proposed time-table, in order to have a document ready for responsible action by the Eighth Assembly, as follows:

Central Committee meeting September 1995: presentation of interim report; approval of the direction the process is taking and of procedures for the remaining three years;

Drafting group consultation, December 1995: preparation of initial texts regarding common understanding and vision;

Executive Committee meeting March 1996: discussion of initial draft and suggestions and comments for revision (to be undertaken by a small drafting group in June or July for mailing to Central Committee members);

Central Committee meeting September 1996: discussion of first draft statement on Common Understanding and Vision (including explanatory memorandum and any proposals for constitutional amendments); agreement on procedures for sending to member churches and incorporating reactions from them;

Executive Committee meeting February 1997: initial discussion of responses from member churches and necessary action (appointment of small editorial team to prepare revised document in time for mailing to Central Committee members);

Central Committee meeting August/September 1997: approval of final version of materials to be presented to the Eighth Assembly, including eventual constitutional changes; decisions on procedure for sending this material to member churches, explanation of the response required from them and the

nature of the discussion at the Eighth Assembly;
Eighth Assembly, September 1998.

The GS Committee expressed concern at the low response from the churches and asked the General Secretary to continue to review this.

It asked those concerned with the process to receive the notes of discussion from the General Secretariat Committee and from the Unit Committees and to consider these in their further discussions.

Dr Wilkens underlined the significance of this study process for the future of the World Council, and regretted all the more the lack of response received so far from the member churches. He wondered whether it was adequate to request the General Secretary «to review» this. Surely some stronger action was required. He proposed the following amendment:

that the General Secretary be requested to write a special letter to the member churches asking them to take a position on the four focal points of the study (mentioned above), and also to respect the deadlines indicated.

The Central Committee **voted in favour** of this amendment, and **agreed** to the above recommendations.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE GENERAL SECRETARIAT

Dr Nababan, chairing this business session, invited Ms Virginia Gcabashe, moderator of the Committee on the General Secretariat, to present the report. (Some items dealt with by the GS Committee are reported separately under the respective chapter of these minutes, including matters related to the Eighth Assembly, Structure-related items, CUV process, response to the Moderator's and General Secretary's reports).

Ms Gcabashe presented the rest of the report as follows:

1. Office for Church and Ecumenical Relations

1.1 Applications for membership

The GS Committee gave careful consideration to a number of **applications for membership**. Each church was looked at individually and the Committee was assured that all the applications were in order.

*It was recommended, and the Central Committee **agreed**, that the following churches be accepted into membership in the World Council of Churches:*

AFRICA – Eglise Baptiste Camerounaise

- **Kenya Evangelical Lutheran Church** (*associate membership*) formerly in membership as part of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania-Kenya Synod.
- **Missao Evangélica Pentecostal de Angola** – associate member church becoming member church on growth in size
- **Igreja Evangélica Reformada de Angola**
- **Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa** – union of former member church, the Dutch Reformed Mission Church with non-member church: the Dutch Reformed Church in Africa.

ASIA – Christian Church of East Timor (GKTT)

- **Gereja Protestan di Sabah (GPS)** – associate member church becoming member church on growth in size

CARIBBEAN – Jamaica Baptist Union

LATIN AMERICA –Anglican Province of the Southern Cone (Argentina, Chile, Peru, Bolivia, Paraguay, Uruguay)

*It was further recommended, and the Central Committee **agreed**, that the National Council of Churches in Australia, successor to the former Australian Council of Churches which was an Associate Council in relationship with the WCC, also be accorded that status.*

In addition, it was **noted** that the regional Church of Schaumburg-Lippe, Germany, which had suspended its membership in 1978, had decided to resume full membership in the WCC.

The new member churches were received by unanimous vote of the Central Committee. Dr Nababan asked representatives of these churches to stand, and members of Central Committee welcomed them. Bishop Zacharias Mar Theophilos then led participants in prayer. During the worship on the morning of 21 September, representatives of the new churches participated in the intercessions, each giving a brief testimony on what membership in the WCC would mean for them and their churches.

Dr Tssetsis wondered whether the WCC would continue indefinitely accepting new members. Some account should be taken of the wider implications involved.

1.2 The Meaning of Membership

A sub-committee composed of members of the Executive and Central Committees was appointed by the Executive at its meeting in September 1994 to review the existing rules and propose new legislation as appropriate. These are set out as approved by Central Committee under *Changes in the Rules* (see p. 199ff).

In addition, this sub-committee drafted a paper on the Meaning of Membership which was referred to the General Secretariat Committee for consideration and action. The draft text, as amended, is found in Appendix X to these minutes.

After giving careful consideration to the paper on **The Meaning of Membership**, and noting that a number of members of Central Committee believed it was helpful in spelling out the responsibilities of membership,

The GS Committee recommended that the paper, as amended, be commended to the Central Committee for transmission to the member churches as a discussion document, and for consideration by Central Committee in 1996 with whatever revisions may be proposed. The GS Committee also commended

the paper to those concerned with the Common Understanding and Vision process.

Fr Kishkovsky welcomed the recommendation as formulated and wished to support it. However, he noted that both in Unit I and in a meeting of Orthodox members, the paper had been discussed and some concerns had been raised. In consultation with several Orthodox CC members, five points had been drawn up, with the request that they be included in the record of the deliberations about the Meaning of Membership. These were:

- a) Statements in the draft paper contain ecclesiological implications for the churches. These statements require further study, reflection and clarification;
- b) For example, when the draft paper speaks of fellowship in the WCC «giving tangible expression to the universality and catholicity of the church», various interpretations can be given to this formulation. One of these interpretations would be that of a «branch theory» of the church which does not reflect the Orthodox understanding and vision of the catholicity and universality of the church;
- c) When the draft paper speaks of the WCC's freedom «to go where the member churches may not be able to go themselves», it could be understood as saying that the WCC is not fundamentally a council of churches;
- d) When the draft paper speaks of the commitment of «each church to seek to implement the agreements reached through the joint theological study and reflection of the total fellowship», it could be understood to mean that agreements of the WCC fellowship can override theological and ecclesiological teachings and convictions of the member churches;
- e) These and other formulations in the draft paper should be the subject of further reflection in the churches and in the WCC. This process of reflection should take place within the *common understanding and vision* process leading up to the WCC Assembly in 1998.

Bp Rogerson wondered whether there was any mechanism that might enable any questioning of «one another if any member is perceived to move away from the fundamentals of the faith or obedience to the gospel..»? If this point were to remain in the paper, who would look at how such a mechanism might be created?

The General Secretary responded that this was a discussion paper offered to the churches for consideration and response, and he hoped that CC members would ensure that their church authorities were encouraged to reflect on it themselves.

It was not for the WCC to tell the churches what they needed to put in place in order to enable this process of questioning to take place. The WCC would want to encourage churches to take action themselves. He hoped that after a year's reflection their responses would make it possible to be more specific about this.

Dr Ariarajah added that, although there was some question as to whether the paper should be developed further in view of the CUV process, it was felt that, since there was currently no document explaining what it meant to be a member of WCC for those churches applying for membership, it would be helpful to have a paper spelling this out. At the same time it was felt that member churches should have opportunity to discuss it and make their own response.

The Central Committee **agreed** to the above recommendation.

1.3 Celebration of the year 2000

The GS Committee learned with interest of the intention of the **Joint Working Group** between the WCC and the Roman Catholic Church to consider plans for celebrating the year 2000, and of the invitation from the Roman Catholic Church to nominate somebody to share in their own planning of these events. Possibilities for joint action included the preparation of Bible studies/ meditations, liturgical material, and a joint pastoral letter. The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity in the three years leading up to the year 2000 could be helpful in preparing for it. If there were to be some kind of common celebration or meeting of heads of Christian Communions the most difficult issue was that of who might convene such a meeting. There was some urgency here, since individual nations/ denominations were already well advanced with their plans. The constituency should be informed of interim plans before final proposals could be agreed. In the celebrations, whilst there should be repentance of sins of both commission and omission, there should also be thankfulness for what had been achieved with a clear emphasis on hope as the people of God enter into the next millennium. Inclusion of youth in any celebration was of vital importance.

1.4 Papal Encyclical

The GS Committee noted the publication of the **Papal Encyclical *Ut Unum Sint***. While appreciation was expressed for the spirit of the document, it was noted that there were also some questions that needed further study and follow up. The Faith and Order Commission would work on a more formal response.

1.5 Evangelical, Pentecostal and Independent Churches

The GS Committee was grateful for the work undertaken by staff in developing relations with Evangelical, Pentecostal and Independent churches, believing it was important that the work be developed and evaluated as part of the preparations for the Eighth Assembly. As there were movements on social concerns, so there were movements relating to Evangelical Churches with whom the WCC ought to be in conversation (e.g. World Evangelical Fellowship). Adequate staffing for this work was very important.

1.6 Guidelines for Relations between National Councils of Churches and the World Council of Churches

The GS Committee in Johannesburg 1994 agreed on a series of Guidelines for Relations between NCCs and the WCC. However, no formal action was taken pending discussion of the text by the NCCs. This discussion having taken place,

the GS Committee recommended that the Guidelines for Relations between NCCs and the WCC be adopted by the Central Committee (see Appendix VII).

The Central Committee **agreed**.

1.7 Mid-Decade Team Visits

Tribute was paid to the **Mid-Decade Team visits**, which had helped to break down prejudices against women's participation in church leadership in some countries. However, the staff concerned were urged to ensure that Central Committee members were informed when teams planned to visit their areas.

2. Office for Inter-Religious Relations (OIRR)

The GS Committee noted the proposal to add theological study to the mandate of the OIRR;

*The GS Committee recommended, and the Central Committee **agreed**, that sufficient resources be found to add theological study to the mandate of the OIRR.*

The reintroduction of dialogue with Hindus was also requested, which – if supported – should be undertaken within the framework of the search for human community.

In response to a question, the General Secretary pointed out that the OIIR had been one of the areas under review by the Structure Review Group (see also p. 189-190). The report of the Advisory Committee on Structural Reorganisation in 1991 had recommended a decentralisation of the work on dialogue with the establishing of OIRR; Unit II was asked to deal with the theological aspects of inter-religious dialogue and relations with people of other faiths, while Faith and Order was asked to take up the question of the church and the Jewish people. However, only OIRR had been functioning, the two other areas remaining less developed because funds had been lacking for the tasks envisaged.

The Structure Review Group was recommending inclusion of the theological dimension into the mandate of OIRR, but this would not mean the introduction of a new programme – it was already part of the WCC's mandate. To allow for this additional task, OIRR staff should be increased by one executive position; however, since no funds were currently available, certain areas of inter-religious dialogue were not receiving the attention they deserved.

Dr Blei thought that one of the reasons for not pursuing this side of the work had been the lack of funds; now there was a recommendation requiring the raising of new funds. Was there no possibility of directing the fund-raising activity towards the decentralisation originally intended?

Dr Raiser replied that additional funds were needed anyhow; the principle question was whether the idea of a decentralised response to the need for intensified inter-religious dialogue and reflection about the theological implications would in fact function. The Review Group believed that the likelihood of successful cooperation between three different partners was fairly limited, and in order to achieve more effective work in this area, plus some theological reflection, it would be better to concentrate efforts as they had been prior to the reorganisation.

3.1 Consolidated Africa Programme

The GS Committee noted the Moderator's comments on the **Consolidated Africa Programme**, together with the Executive's judgement that these priorities needed Council-wide coordination and monitoring.

The GS Committee recommended, and the Central Committee agreed, that the Council's commitment to this task be reaffirmed and that the Deputy General Secretary for Programmes be asked to oversee it.

Dr Tolen was grateful for this reaffirmation of action regarding Africa and the reminder that this should be a joint programme of all the Units. The Africa Regional group had raised two points: a) the need for Central Committee and staff concerned to be aware that, while the programme was for all Units, this created some problems regarding its execution. Efforts must therefore be made to avoid the programme falling between two stools; b) it was reassuring that the AACC was involved, but it should be stated that everything possible was being done to ensure that the integrity of the programme and of the WCC was preserved. He hoped that regular reports on the Programme would be shared with Central Committee.

3.2 Support for churches in Cuba

Appreciation was expressed for the work of the US Office/NCCCUSA in co-ordinating church support for the churches in Cuba. Pastor Mendez expressed gratitude to the WCC for its solidarity with Cuban Christians in times of great difficulty. The question was raised as to whether the US Office could do anything to challenge North American sectarian agencies that sent missionaries all over the world, proclaiming a perverse gospel of a consumer society to the detriment of the interests of existing Christian communities.

4. WCC Presidents

The GS Committee underlined the need for the role and function of the **Presidents** to be reconsidered. Both the qualifications of those chosen to serve, and the expectations made of them, needed clarification.

5. Resolution on Homosexuality

Bishop Bue recalled that the General Secretary, replying to a question about the issue of homosexuality, had implied that this would be taken up at a subsequent date. A report in ENI indicated that this was a question on which the WCC had not yet developed a position. Linked to local cultural traditions, the issue was under discussion in several churches, but it was not one that called for common engagement by the churches. He moved the following recommendation:

The General Secretariat of WCC should not undertake/proceed to an elaboration of the issue of homosexuality except at the specific request of the Central Committee.

Bishop Bue explained that his proposal was based on the following reflections:

- the question of homosexuality concerned only certain churches in western cultures;
- the churches in Europe and North America should not impose on the global church a discussion of an issue that was not currently topical for the majority of churches;
- opinions on the subject varied widely and an in-depth treatment of it may pose a risk to the unity within the WCC;
- in Europe and North America there were pressure groups attempting to provoke the WCC to take a position on the issue; they were trying to get the churches to recognise the legal and moral right to cohabitation of members of the same sex;
- a decision by Central Committee not to deal with this question in the coming years would reduce pressure on the General Secretariat on the part of lobbying groups.

Mr Huttenga pointed out that the issue had not been tabled and there was no adequate opportunity to discuss it. Secondly, even if it did not affect all churches, it was a problem for many people all over the world whether or not the church had spoken out on it.

Dr Tolen said it was the view of the Africa regional group that the General Secretary should be free to take any necessary action with regard to the attendance of all delegates and participants at the Harare assembly, but he was satisfied that the necessary guarantees had been assured. The proposal would also allow the Officers to raise the matter at an appropriate time.

Speaking from the US perspective, Fr Kishkovsky did not believe that the churches had received much help from the NCCCUSA in dealing with the issue over a period of many years, and he was not convinced that the WCC could assist churches to address the issue either.

The General Secretary asserted that, were this proposal accepted, it would be the first time that Central Committee had bound the hands of a General Secretary in exercising his office: he felt it would be a questionable precedent, and would not in fact be helpful. From the moment that this issue first arose, he had made clear the fact that the WCC had no position on it, and currently he saw no likelihood of reaching any common position.

The Central Committee **voted against** the recommendation.

REPORT OF UNIT I COMMITTEE

UNITY AND RENEWAL

Ms Ritchie, presiding, invited Prof. Nenevi Seddoh the Committee's co-moderator, to present the report. Ms Seddoh explained that in the absence of the moderator, Metropolitan Daniel of Moldavia and Bukovina, she wished to ask Dr Paul Crow, who had acted as co-moderator for this meeting, to present the report.

Dr Crow noted that the Unit I Committee had received good reports on inter-unit collaboration which was such an important aspect of the Unit's work.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Unit I Committee warmly welcomed Father Thomas FitzGerald, the new Executive Director of Unit I, who introduced the work of the Unit. He touched on the fact that the endeavours of staff to work more closely with one another were sometimes a struggle, but a conscious effort was made to encourage the spirit of cooperation and collaboration between the streams.
- 1.2 The Unit I Committee affirmed the inter-unit collaboration and cooperative studies approved by the Faith and Order Standing Commission at Crêt-Bérard in 1994 and Aleppo in 1995; it invited the staff of the streams of Unit I together, and in consultation with the staff of other units, to develop guidelines for such collaborative and cooperative programmes.
- 1.3 The work of Unit I deals with some of the most vital issues of present concern among the churches: much progress had been made over the last 50 years. However, Father FitzGerald referred to comments he had received about some churches not being interested in the work of Unit I.
- 1.4 The financial crisis of the WCC was mentioned and the particular effect it had on the work of Unit I, which was dependent for 22% of

its total budget from undesignated income. A substantial discussion on finance was held. The following questions were raised:

- Does the financial crisis reflect a spiritual crisis in the WCC and in the member churches?
- Should the churches be asked to designate money to Unit I?
- Could more be done to strengthen the link with the churches with regard to the nature of the work in Unit I?
- When WCC meetings take place in different countries, would it be possible to discuss the financial questions of the WCC with the churches in these countries?

The question of communication was also raised: it was noted that the WCC was perceived as being at a distance from the member churches and therefore the churches do not identify with the programmes or see the need to support its work.

- 1.5 Arising out of the question as to who sets the Unit's budget, discussion also took place on the relationship between the responsibilities of the Unit Committee, the Unit Commission and the Working Groups. The Unit Committee was reminded of the position clearly stated in the Constitution that the responsibility for finance, staffing and policy lies within the Unit Committee. This means that full information on these matters needs to be available to the Unit Committee.

Mr Rüegger asked for suggestions as to how to motivate the churches to give money to the World Council. Sometimes the advice was to ask for more undesignated income (UDI), while others felt the answer was to seek designated funds.

Mr Davies responded that designated funds were always welcome and any money that came in designated for Unit I would mean that the Unit would require less UDI. Unit I was the only Unit that relied on UDI for its work; the other Units were able to maintain their programmes from funds designated for them. The General Secretary pointed to another solution: to find ways of increasing UDI that benefited Unit I.

2. Faith and Order

- 2.1 Dr Mary Tanner, Moderator of the Faith and Order Commission, introduced the new staff of Faith and Order to the Unit Committee, and gave an overview of activities. She emphasized the continuity and

patient development of their agenda related to the visible unity of the Church in response to new insights in the life of the churches.

- 2.2 The major study programme was **Ecclesiology: the Church as Koinonia**. The Committee also looked at the programme on **Ecclesiology and Ethics** and made the following recommendation to the Central Committee:

that the Central Committee at its meeting in 1996 set aside time for consideration of the study on Ecclesiology and Ethics.

Dr Kässmann said that a similar proposal would come from Unit III, specifically requesting a plenary subject on this issue. It was decided to defer action on this recommendation and deal with it in the context of the Unit III Report.

- 2.3 The Unit Committee endorsed the resolution of the Faith and Order Standing Commission at Crêt-Bérard in 1994 to hold a meeting of the Plenary Commission, 10-24 August 1996, and welcomed the assurance of the Executive Committee that the sum of Sfr 90,000 for the meeting of the Plenary Commission had first priority in 1995 in the event of a surplus of undesignated money. The Unit I Committee affirmed the reinstatement of this amount in the annual budget as of 1996.
- 2.4 The Unit Committee warmly welcomed and supported the recommendations of the WCC Executive Committee in Bucharest in September 1994, affirmed by the Unit I Commission in 1995 and approved by the Faith and Order Standing Commission at Aleppo in 1995:
- a) to take new initiatives to study the question of a Common Date of Easter;
 - b) to study anew the theological concerns related to Eucharistic Sharing with a view to proposing revised guidelines for such sharing at ecumenical gatherings while taking into account previous work on these questions.

It was noted that these matters would be referred to both the Worship and Spirituality stream and to Faith and Order.

3. Worship and Spirituality

- 3.1 The Moderator of the Working Group, Prof. Nenevi Seddoh, introduced the report of the stream as referred in the Unit I Commission minutes. She highlighted the fact that provision had previously been made for the staff member of the stream on Worship and Spirituality to be a permanent member of staff.
- 3.2 The Unit I Committee noted that all programme activities, apart from the valuable preparation of worship services in the house and for consultations and meetings of the WCC, were dependent on the appointment of a full time staff member. The Committee was dismayed to note that this significant area of the life of the WCC was being neglected.

Dr Granberg-Michaelson underlined his church's view that this position was of particular importance to the WCC and should not be frozen because of financial constraints. Staff resources in the area of worship and spirituality had long been under-resourced, yet these issues were fundamental to the life of the churches and of the WCC. He urged that consideration be given to ensuring greater flexibility in assigning staff responsibilities.

On recommendation of the Unit I Committee, the Central Committee:
recognized that approval to fill the vacant position in Worship and Spirituality was given by the Executive Committee in September 1994 and that applications for the position were being received; and urged that the vacant position in Worship and Spirituality be filled as soon as possible.

Prof. Romanides noted that the Orthodox Church in its historical development had been affected by Westernization of the Orthodox tradition which has become localised in different parts of the Orthodox Church. He felt the WCC was not in dialogue with that part of the Orthodox Church which is advocating a return to the patristic tradition; this movement is strong and much of the opposition to the WCC within Orthodoxy comes from there.

Dr Crow spoke of the Unit Committee's view that the consultations and workshops proposed were an attempt to help the churches recognise that worship and spirituality are a priority of the WCC, which could provide an occasion for people to talk about what the Council will do in Harare, helping them to see the importance of mutual commitment to the ecumenical movement.

Bishop Krusche stressed the urgency of revising the *Ecumenical Prayer Cycle*, especially in view of the fundamentally changed situation in Eastern Europe; the information provided was now incorrect and does not help people pray in an informed way.

3.3 The Central Committee *further affirmed* that the recommendations from the Unit I Commission be implemented upon the appointment of the staff member of the Worship and Spirituality stream and upon financial resources available, as follows:

- a) that, in accordance with its programme proposals, the stream coordinate a number of regional consultations on Christian Spirituality Today as part of the preparation for the Eighth Assembly of the WCC (in coordination with the preparatory processes discussed in the Assembly Planning Committee);
- b) that the stream sponsor or co-sponsor a number of regional workshops on worship designed especially for pastors and lay leaders involved in the renewal of worship also with monastic communities;
- c) that a new edition of the *Ecumenical Prayer Cycle* be prepared;
- d) that the stream sponsor further studies on «Ecumenical Life», such as those previously held in Geneva, Nairobi, Kansai, Jerusalem and Prague, and that the stream intensify its work in respect to the materials collected in the Worship Resource Centre.

4. Lay Participation towards Inclusive Community

4.1 The Unit Committee heard a report by Fr Nicholas Apostola, Moderator of the Working Group, in which attention was drawn to the Commission's recommendations. In discussion, the areas of cooperation amongst laity, the growing attention given to laity in Eastern Europe, the role of lay centres and the need to clarify the nature of collaboration with other units – especially with regard to women – were touched on.

4.2 On recommendation of the Unit I Committee, the Central Committee:

- a) *agreed* that a consultation be held on the Profile of the Laity and that, in preparation for this, further explorations of the historical and theological understanding of laity, laos and people of God be undertaken in consultation with Faith and Order. (This consultation arises out of the new programmatic priority on the Profile of the Laity, agreed by Central Committee at its meeting in 1994).

- b) i. *agreed to create a permanent staff position in place of the present consultancy on the Differently Abled;*
- ii. *urged the WCC and the member churches to take seriously participation in worship of Differently Abled persons in their identity and integrity;*
- iii. *encouraged studies to be undertaken on the theological, social and psychological particularities of the Differently Abled, developing theological insights on the basis of existing studies in this area.*

Ms Rantakari reminded Central Committee that the fact that it had approved a programme or consultation did not imply that funding was available. Staff had been requested to prepare a strategic plan setting out priorities, and everything else approved by Central Committee must be seen in that framework.

5. Ecumenical Theological Education

- 5.1 In the absence of Dr Elsa Tamez, Moderator of the ETE Working Group, the coordinator of ETE, Rev. Dr John Pobee, presented the work of the stream to the Unit Committee. He expressed appreciation for the collaboration of the Vatican in their work, in the Working Group and through financial contribution.

The emphasis of the stream had been on «Viability of Ministerial Formation Today» and there had been a process of studying through consultations in the regions as reported to the Commission. Plans were in hand for a Global Consultation on the viability of ministerial formation: «Ecumenical Theological Education: Its Viability Today» in Oslo, Norway in August 1996.

- 5.2 It was felt that, ETE being the main contact between the World Council and theological faculties and other theological institutions, as well as different theologies around the world, it was therefore a special instrument of the Council. The Unit I Committee recommended, and the Central Committee **agreed**:

- a. *that efforts be made to find an amount of US \$ 120,000 as a contribution to the cost of a Global Consultation (total cost: US\$ 404,000) on «The Viability of Ministerial Formation Today»; (the proposals regarding this consultation were endorsed by Central Committee in Johannesburg in 1994.*

- b. *to commend the document **Ecumenical Formation** prepared by the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity and ETE under the auspices of the Joint Working Group for use in programmes of ecumenical formation.*

6. Common Understanding and Vision (CUV)

6.1 The Unit Committee had a useful discussion both in small groups and in plenary. The following areas were raised:

- The role of the WCC as a council of churches was affirmed;
- The development of new ways of relating to the Christian World Communions could lead to a new way of working with the Roman Catholic Church;
- There was a need to identify our reference points in our journey towards visible unity. We were at a point where we need to be more specific about the remaining areas of conflict which are stumbling blocks to full communion;
- The issue of communication was again raised. Concern was expressed about the lack of responses received in relation to the CUV process, and there was some discussion as to the reasons for this. It was felt that the churches need to be fully involved in the search towards visible unity: this search arises out of the Gospel and involves the whole people of God;
- Reference was made to the importance of earlier documents, including BEM, the Canberra Statement on Koinonia and the Santiago de Compostela achievements, and to the need to build on these documents in developing a common understanding and vision;
- A considerable discussion was held in the light of documents on the Meaning of Membership: was it appropriate to approve these proposals at this stage before reaching agreement on a common understanding and vision?

6.2 The Unit I Committee received the staff response to the questions of the General Secretary with regard to the CUV and made some comments to be passed on to staff and to the Unit I Commission to be fed into the process.

7. Response to Central Committee plenaries

- 7.1 Bishop Zacharias Mar Theophilos referred to the plenary sessions on mission, uprooted people and racism and outlined their significance for the work of the Unit. Unit I should look at the spiritual, ecclesial, theological and lay aspects of mission in order to contribute to the statement to be drawn up for the Unit II World Conference on Mission.

Inter-unit cooperation between Units I and III required strengthening with regard to the Theology of Life, in order to develop a common understanding. Racism in the life of the member churches also needs to be addressed. This has significance within Unit I for the unity and renewal of the church. It was emphasized that these questions cannot be raised without the input of Unit I within the life of the WCC.

- 7.2 Rev. Elizabeth Welch introduced the reflection on the assembly, which led to a helpful discussion in relation to the plans for the next assembly. The CUV process formed the background for emphasis on the need to discuss the place of visible unity in the WCC and for the necessity of looking at appropriate models for renewing the commitment to the ecumenical movement. It was emphasized that it was not so much a matter of re-commitment as if the former commitment had disappeared; it was a matter of re-affirming and celebrating the commitment that had continued over the past 50 years.

- 7.3 The question of eucharistic celebration within the official programme at the next assembly evoked major discussion. The following points were made:

- There has been much convergence on the understanding of the Eucharist (for example, BEM);
- There was still divergence between our traditions and in the measure of reception in the life of member churches;
- Difficulties arose in finding a means for Central Committee to vote on this matter in a way that would take serious account of minority views. It was noted that it was not for Central Committee to decide on questions of eucharistic understanding within any one of the member churches;
- Recognition should be given of the progress achieved by many member churches in the matter of shared communion;

- Perception of any decision by those within the churches and outside the churches must be taken seriously;
- A strong plea was made to draw up a statement setting out the position of different traditions with regard to the Eucharist and the reasons why these positions were held.

It was noted that the Assembly Planning Committee would bring a recommendation on this matter to Central Committee in 1996.

Mr Birmelé emphasised the importance of involving the churches in a thorough reflection on the vision of the World Council; this should involve us with fundamental theological questions which need to be highlighted. He felt that the financial crisis, the lack of communication, the distance between the churches on various issues, were the result of a failure to be precise in defining the commitment of the Council vis à vis the churches and vice versa. This was one among the theological questions facing us which requires urgent clarification so that the WCC does not become a forum **apart from** the churches but remains a council **of** the churches.

He asked whether it was possible to stick to the decision by Central Committee 45 years ago that the churches not be bound by decisions of the WCC, nor the Council be bound by the churches' decisions. This should be looked again and Mr Birmelé wondered whether the Unit I Committee could deal with these fundamental issues at its meeting in 1996, otherwise he feared the common commitment between the churches and the Council would suffer in the longer term.

The General Secretary welcomed the thrust of this proposal but pointed out that this was already central to the whole CUV process: Faith and Order was already working on the issues. It was hoped to bring some draft considerations for discussion in the Unit Committees in 1996 that would reflect our present understanding, and clarify these in the sense indicated by Mr Birmelé.

The Central Committee *received* the report of Unit I Committee with appreciation.

At a later session, Dr Mac Charles Jones commented that, in spite of the fact that the Council was undergoing a serious financial crisis, the Central Committee had nonetheless received this Unit Committee report and approved a number of recommendations, many of which involved the holding of consultations. He moved the following recommendation:

*Noting that, in the Unit I Committee report, additional funding and staff commitments were made and approved; and in light of the Finance Committee Moderator's statement, the Central Committee **requested** that these issues be considered by the staff in an integrated strategic plan where these priorities, and the priorities of other Units, be considered before financial commitments are made.*

This was **agreed**.

REPORT OF UNIT II COMMITTEE

CHURCHES IN MISSION: HEALTH, EDUCATION, WITNESS

Ms Ritchie, presiding, invited Dr Ruth Page, acting moderator of the Unit II Committee in the absence of Ms Marion Best, to present the report.

With regard to the Unit's programmatic work, Dr Page drew attention to the wide ranging and varied tasks that the Unit was involved in. Much of the work initiated earlier was continuing in a satisfactory way.

Programmatic Matters

The Unit Committee received with appreciation the report of the Unit II Commission meeting held in Coventry, England, in June 1995.

1. Gospel and Cultures / Theological Significance of Other Faiths

- 1.1 The Unit Committee noted with satisfaction that, since the Gospel and Cultures study was endorsed by Central Committee in January 1994, it had gained entry points in all the regions; local and regional coordinators had contributed to new advances, and a number of specialized groups were contributing to the study process.
- 1.2 In view of the importance of the issues raised by the study, the Unit Committee requested, and the Central Committee **agreed**
to encourage the churches to engage with the theme of Gospel and Cultures in a concerted way during 1995-1996 as part of their participation in the preparatory processes for the Conference on World Mission and Evangelism.

Mr Rüegger, while in favour of the content of this recommendation and the process of preparation for the World Mission Conference, suggested that it not be a formal recommendation to the churches; he felt it was unrealistic to expect churches to be able to respond to all the WCC asked them to do. Many were indeed already involved, but others felt that so many requests were coming from ecumenical bodies that they could not deal with them all. The more the Council asked them to do, the less they would take such requests seriously.

Dr Page appreciated the point, but felt that in this case it was more a matter of consciousness raising; even if churches had done nothing so far in relation to the World Conference and did not plan to do anything, it would raise their consciousness that this was a concern, and inform them that others were working on the issue. The General Secretary reminded Central Committee that he always sent a letter to member churches following each meeting informing them of decisions made, and this recommendation would be included there.

- 1.3 The Unit Committee recognized that the Theological Significance of Other Faiths continued as an important concern that was being carried on in relation with the Gospel and Cultures study process, as well as the Unit's programme on Christian Education in Multi-Faith Societies; in addition, the Gospel and Cultures desk cooperated with the Office on Inter-Religious Relations which was also working on these issues. The Unit Committee noted this programmatic approach with satisfaction.

2. Conference on World Mission and Evangelism (CWME) – «Called to One Hope: The Gospel in Diverse Cultures», to be held in Salvador, Bahia, Brazil – 24 November – 3 December 1996

- 2.1 The Unit Committee was pleased with reports from the Commission concerning the overall plans for the CWME. Underscoring the relevance of the theme and the relation of the theme and the venue, the Committee endorsed the arrangements and preparatory processes.
- 2.2 *Noting that the first list of membership of the CWME would be ready only by February 1996, the Unit Committee requested the Central Committee to direct the Executive Committee, at its meeting in March 1996, to approve the overall framework of participation and a partial membership list, and advise concerning the final approval of the Conference membership.*

Dr Wilkens asked about the terminology used here: why was there reference to «membership» of the conference rather than to «delegates»?

Ms Langerak explained that the CWME had a special character with its own bylaws which recognise that the Conference has a membership of its own in the form of affiliated bodies, mainly missionary agencies and councils which belong to it directly; a bulk of the participants would come from these, complemented

by a proportion coming directly from the member churches. The CWME was thus different from a WCC assembly, in that it was a deliberative conference where ideas were shared, not a business meeting where decisions were made.

With this explanation, the Central Committee **agreed** to the above request.

- 2.3 Given the adverse effect of currency fluctuations, inflation and additional costs in relation to local organization, the budget presented in January 1994 had had to be revised to CHF 3,278,623. The current budget deficit was CHF 450,908, essentially the same deficit accepted at Johannesburg. The Committee noted with satisfaction that additional funds had been pledged towards that amount. On recommendation of the Unit Committee,

*the Central Committee **approved** the revised total for the CWME budget of CHF 3,278,623.*

- 2.4 The Unit Committee noted that the Unit was prepared to protect the Conference by delving further into its reserves and by reducing expenditure and increasing income as much as possible. It further noted that implementation of this priority may have consequences for the implementation of other Unit II programmes. The Unit Committee reaffirmed the high priority of the Conference on World Mission and Evangelism as an activity of the whole of the WCC.

3. New Ecumenical Statement on Mission and Evangelism

- 3.1 Following a decision to initiate a new document on mission and evangelism (rather than updating the 1982 statement), the Unit Committee affirmed the process outlined in the Commission report. Representatives of the churches, Unit II constituencies and networks were being involved in a wide-ranging discussion on the understanding of mission and evangelism.
- 3.2 The Unit Committee noted that the preparation of the new statement was a Council-wide concern undertaken by the Unit and that, in spite of a difficult financial situation, the necessary funding for the process would be assured.
- 3.3 A draft outline of the statement would be presented to the CWME in Salvador. The final statement would be forwarded to the Central Committee in 1997 for adoption and commendation to the churches,

with the request that it be received by and given high visibility at the Eighth Assembly.

Dr Page stressed the fact that the previous CWME, in San Antonio in 1989, had had regrettably little impact on the Canberra Assembly. There was a clear intention to ensure that the present Conference would have some repercussions for the Harare Assembly.

In response to a request from Dr Blei for more information about the motives for preparing a new statement on mission and evangelism, Dr Page said that when asked for suggestions about updating the earlier statement of 1982, many indicated that it was no longer relevant to their situation. It had therefore been decided to write a new statement.

Dr Raiser requested members of Central Committee to bear in mind that this was not the only case where a statement was being prepared on a major focus of our ecumenical mandate. First discussions were going on about a statement on the unity issue; another on ecumenical social ethics as a consequence of the Theology of Life process, not forgetting the two statements in front of this meeting – on Uprooted People and on Racism. He hoped there would be agreement that all these would ultimately come together under the Common Understanding and Vision process. Each of these represented a particular facet of the total understanding of what the WCC was called as a fellowship to witness and serve.

4. Statement on Common Witness

- 4.1 A draft plan for a statement on common witness had been prepared in response to various mandates. The statement aimed at promoting responsible relationships in mission and renouncing proselytism. The Unit Committee discussed the draft outline and suggested several points for inclusion.
- 4.2 The Unit executive director was asked to circulate the revised plan to the Central Committee and member churches following this meeting to elicit comments and suggestions.
- 4.3 The plan involved holding specific consultations in various regions, collecting feedback and comments from churches (including stories, experiences and appropriate statements) and an ongoing study. The draft

statement would be shared at the CWME and the final statement would be forwarded to the Central Committee in 1997 for reception and commendation to the churches.

Ms Welch asked that there be some strategy for dealing with the various matters that require a letter to the member churches. She felt the churches were being asked to do too many things, and this was perhaps one of the reasons for the lack of response regarding the CUV process.

5. Urban Rural Mission (URM)

- 5.1 The Unit Committee received the progress report on developments in the URM programme. This included steps to follow up the «common understanding of the practice of discipline» (*URM Reflections '93*) with efforts to review and strengthen the regional activities of URM in fulfilment of the agreed mandate and priorities. Special attention was being given to strengthening relations with the churches, to ensuring greater participation of women within URM, and working towards a degree of longer-term stability of funding. The Committee affirmed these directions and commended the attention being paid to reviewing URM methodologies in view of diminishing resources available through the WCC.

6. Addiction

- 6.1 The Unit Committee received a document on *Alcoholism and Drug Addiction: Challenges to the Church*,¹⁰ reviewed it thoroughly and affirmed its usefulness as a resource to the churches and local congregations.
- 6.2 Given the current priorities and constraints of the Unit, further specific work on this subject within Unit II was not anticipated. Nevertheless, the Unit Committee suggested that the Youth desk take up issues related to youth and addictions, that the Programme to Overcome Violence address the issues of violence and addictions, and that all units give attention to the severity of the issue of addictions and integrate this concern into their programmes.

¹⁰ See Appendix XII – documents available on request (B.3)

- 6.3 The Unit Committee called on the churches to give greater attention to addiction concerns in their Christian education and family life programmes.

Bishop Gomez saw the issue of the various kinds of addiction as one of the major social issues in society today and encouraged Unit II to deal with it through its existing programmes as well.

7. Education for all God's People

- 7.1 The Unit Committee affirmed the priorities of the Unit's Education programmes as adopted by the Commission. In the current period the priority for this team would be Christian religious education in multi-faith and pluralistic societies. Religious education programmes in Central and Eastern Europe, as mandated by the Central Committee in 1991, would continue as a major component.
- 7.2 The Committee requested the executive director and Unit staff to review all the work and staffing needs related to education so that proposals for ongoing and future work could be developed at the 1996 meeting of the Working Group on Education for All God's People.
- 7.3 The Committee further requested that appropriate attention be given to family life education and adult education; that issues of domestic violence be an integral part of the family life education focus; and that the churches be encouraged to share their experience and resources in coping with this concern.
- 7.4 The Committee drew the attention of Central Committee to its minute of January 1994 on the «Policy Guidelines for Education» as prepared by the Mandated Working Group on Education, which urge all WCC units to ensure consideration and implementation of these guidelines.

There were several expressions of concern about the need to continue work in the field of family education, although it was noted that means were not available at the present time. Metropolitan Chrysostomos pointed out that as Christians and as pastors today we are faced with the problem of the «crisis of the family». He pleaded for help in analysing the situation in order to face adequately the continuing disintegration of the family.

8. CMC – Churches' Action for Health

- 8.1 The Unit Committee affirmed the priorities and overall directions for the Health programmes as adopted by the Commission.
- 8.2 The Committee acknowledged the Unit's commitment to the Pharmaceutical programme and endorsed the structural relationship of this programme to the Unit as agreed by the Commission. The Unit would seek a new commitment from partner agencies concerning funding and relationships of the programme in accordance with the proposed «Memorandum of Understanding».
- 8.3 The Committee affirmed CMC's inclusion of work on gospel and culture issues in relation to health and healing in its overall activities.

9. Study on HIV/AIDS

The Unit Committee noted the progress on the HIV/AIDS study mandated in Johannesburg and affirmed its comprehensive nature. The Committee further affirmed the study outline with the specific suggestion that the churches link with other appropriate agencies in HIV/AIDS concerns. The Committee anticipated that the study resources would be shared with the churches to enable local congregations to meet the challenge of HIV/AIDS. The study was due to be completed in early 1996 and would be reported on to Central Committee at its meeting in September.

Other Matters

10. Racism

Although racism was not mentioned as a specific programme area in Unit II, it was a priority concern which was clearly part of the work of the whole Unit. The Conference on World Mission and Evangelism's venue (Salvador, Bahia, Brazil) and major focus (gospel and cultures) would provide an excellent opportunity to examine the functioning of racism in culture and in the proclamation of the gospel. The Unit Committee trusted that the new mission and evangelism statement would take into account the impact of racism on the historical and future development of mission, and urged that the Unit address racism in relation to all its programmes.

11. General Concerns

In response to the reports of the Moderator, the General Secretary, the Common Understanding and Vision of the WCC process and Assembly Planning Committee, some observations by the Unit Committee were shared with the General Secretariat Committee. The points below had special reference to the Unit II mandate and agenda.

11.1 General Secretary's Report

The Unit Committee noted the General Secretary's comments on Unit II and the «creation of one administrative centre in each unit» to provide greater coordination and financial management. It wished to point out that steps were being taken by the Unit towards more transparent, focused and integrated management of programmes, as outlined by the Commission. Within this context, staff transitions represented one of the opportunities to arrive at more cohesive programmes and better fulfil Central Committee priorities.

11.2 Moderator's Report

The Unit Committee commended the Moderator for lifting up the Gospel and Cultures theme and placing it at the heart of the Central Committee's agenda. The Committee also appreciated that the issue was centred in the *missiological* implications of the interaction between the gospel and human cultures, in the context of new challenges facing Christian mission.

11.3 Common Understanding and Vision of the WCC

The Unit Committee acknowledged the deep concern for common witness in the history of the ecumenical movement and the formation of the WCC. In working towards a common understanding and vision of the WCC, it hoped that due recognition would be given to common witness as an essential part of that vision. It also noted the General Secretary's concern to broaden links within the worldwide ecumenical movement. Unit II programmes related to many evangelical, pentecostal and independent churches. The Conference on World Mission and Evangelism would be a place for wider participation of churches, mission agencies and councils in a WCC programme.

11.4 Eighth Assembly

The Unit Committee noted with appreciation that Gospel and Cultures would be one of the major foci of the Eighth Assembly, as mentioned in the Moderator's report.

The Central Committee *received* the report of Unit II Committee with appreciation.

REPORT OF UNIT III COMMITTEE

JUSTICE, PEACE, CREATION

Dr Nababan, presiding, invited Dr Margot Kässmann to present the report of the Unit III Committee. Dr Kässmann began by welcoming Rev. Eugenio Poma-Añaguaya, the first indigenous person to be appointed to WCC staff as a consultant.

Introduction

The Unit Committee received the report of the Executive Director of Unit III, Rev. Samuel Kobia, and discussed specific areas of the work of the Unit. Matters concerning the Eighth Assembly, the Moderator's and General Secretary's reports, as well as documents on Common Understanding and Vision, and on the meaning of membership, were referred to the General Secretariat Committee. Recommendations on Uprooted People were referred to Unit IV Committee.

1. Theology of Life

Unit III was requested to consider whether, after completion of the 25 case studies, a consultation be held of theologians from the respective areas where these studies have been made, to reflect on the results of these case studies on a theological basis. The purpose of such a consultation would be to compose elements of a common theological thrust on social ethics in an ecumenical framework.

Metr. Athanasios asked whether only the results of these case studies would be taken into account in the work on Theology of Life. He felt it might be helpful to include also results of other consultations on ecological issues held under the auspices of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the Orthodox Centre in Chambésy.

2. Ecclesiology and Ethics

The Committees of Units I and III recommended, and the Central Committee agreed

that a third consultation be held regarding the issue of ecclesiology and ethics, and that the results of the consultations in Rønde and Tantur together with

those of this third one, be brought to Central Committee in September 1996 in a plenary presentation jointly prepared by Unit I and Unit III.

Dr Tanner was grateful for this joint recommendation but urged that there should also be some reference to the Theology of Life.

3. Racism

Unit III Committee recommended, and the Central Committee **agreed**, that:

- 3.1 *the Framework Document on Racism¹¹ be adapted into a «user-friendly» version which should include the biblical basis for the work on racism, in order to facilitate wide discussion and response from member churches and local groups;*
 - a) *up to three consultations/workshops should be held, including one in Asia, to contribute to the reflection process;*
 - b) *Central Committee members should commit themselves to furthering this dialogue at regional, national and local levels, indicating their willingness to do so to PCR staff;*
 - c) *input from these processes should be used to compile a study document on the globalization of racism (of which the Framework Document would be the first step), for consideration by the Unit III Commission in 1997 and then referred to the Unit III Committee/Central Committee in September 1997.*
- 3.2 *the WCC reaffirm its commitment to the campaign on **Racism as a Violation of Human Rights** in the USA, with financial and staff resources to be provided by the US churches, the National Council of Churches of Christ (NCCC-USA), and the World Council of Churches. The commitment to the people who testified during the Campaign hearings in November 1994 should be facilitated by:*
 - a) *education on racism, with churches and movement groups in the USA, as well as internationally, on the issue of human rights violations in the USA;*
 - b) *advocacy on these issues;*
 - c) *acts of active solidarity with churches, movements and individuals who choose to be involved in these issues.*

¹¹ See appendix XII - Documents available on request (no. 6.5)

It was noted that economic racism and the ecological factor should be taken up in the context of further work on this issue. The reference to a consultation in Asia was questioned, but Dr Kässmann responded that the Committee felt that PCR had so far concentrated its efforts mainly in Africa and North America, and it was opportune to give more time to Asia and the Pacific region.

4. Youth

The Unit Committee adopted a series of recommendations¹² from the Mandated Working Group on Youth, and recommended that:

- *a group consisting of Central Committee members, Mandated Youth Working Group members and others be formed to plan, organize, and if required facilitate the Pre-Assembly Youth Event (PAYE); such a group should not exceed eight members; finances should be made available to carry out this work;*
- *noting that the Assembly Planning Committee report included an item entitled «From generation to generation», the APC be asked to develop the theme «generational reconciliation» in addition to the emphasis proposed;*
- *the APC be invited to consider incorporating a children's programme into the Assembly; that this be made known to the delegates attending the Assembly, and that the APC approach the local organizing committee in Zimbabwe to consider taking on this responsibility.*

The Central Committee **agreed** to these recommendations.

5. Eighth Assembly

The Unit III Committee affirmed the interim report of the Assembly Planning Committee regarding the Allocation of Seats for Delegates to the Eighth Assembly, and recommended that:

- *the memorandum of understanding being drawn up with the Zimbabwe government, reflect the WCC's commitment, as in previous assemblies, to ensure conditions of access to all participants in the assembly, no harassment of any participant, no interference by authorities in the*

¹² See Appendix XII - documents available on request (C.6)

- programme or pronouncements of the assembly, freedom of the accredited press, freedom of speech and the security of all participants;*
- *the Open Space include four main areas of the Unit's programmatic work: Theology of Life with focus on the 10 Affirmations on Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation; a children's programme focusing on children's perceptions of the Theology of Life; the Programme to Overcome Violence; the Ecumenical Decade of the Churches in Solidarity with Women, and the Creation Forum;*
 - *the hearings include programmatic responses to the seven themes of the Unit;*
 - *any act of commitment made during the assembly should include, in particular, the concerns of the Ecumenical Decade of the Churches in Solidarity with Women;*
 - *Bible Studies sent to the churches in preparation for the assembly, and Bible Studies at the assembly should reflect the issues that the Decade has highlighted, for example, violence against women, integrity of creation;*
 - *all the above issues be reflected in the regional and sub-regional preparatory processes for the assembly.*

With some amendments (incorporated in the above text), the Central Committee **agreed** to these recommendations.

6. Sanctions

The Unit Committee recalled the decision by Central Committee in Johannesburg requesting «that a study be initiated to assess the role of sanctions, their effectiveness and conditions of their applicability as an important means toward peaceful resolution and transformation of conflict. Results should be reported to the Central Committee in 1995.» (Minutes CC 1994 p. 113)

The Committee received a document «Memorandum and Recommendations on the Application of Sanctions» (see Appendix V). While acknowledging a need to rethink underlying assumptions and especially «power» issues regarding those from whose perspective the statement was written, the Unit Committee recommended that, with some additions and amendments, *this Memorandum be received and forwarded to member churches for study and discussion.*

Mr Mendez underlined the need to stress clearly that the WCC could only

envisage supporting moral sanctions – it could never support economic sanctions which inevitably affect above all the most needy among the population, the innocent victims, without affecting the structures of power.

Dr Kässmann explained that the document was designed to stimulate discussion in the churches; Central Committee was not asked to approve it but to receive it, and commend it to the churches for discussion.

Metr. Chrysostomos warned that sanctions were against freedom and personhood, where powers attempt to impose their will on others weaker than themselves. This was against the gospel. We must beware of becoming an instrument of the powers in the world.

The Central Committee **agreed** to the above recommendation.

7. United Nations

The Unit Committee considered a Memorandum and Recommendations on the occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations (see Appendix VI.) It received with appreciation comments on this document from the Unit IV Committee which it took into account in its deliberations.

The Unit Committee recommended, and the Central Committee **agreed**, *to receive the background memorandum and commend it to the member churches for study, and to adopt the recommendations, as amended, contained therein.*

Prof. Aagaard raised a question about the status the World Council wished to have with the United Nations at this stage. The General Secretary responded that a debate on this question was in process, and was also taking place within the UN system. It was anticipated that there would be certain changes in the present regulations which would probably affect all NGOs which currently had consultative status with the UN. The debate would continue.

Bishop Engelhardt was concerned that at a time when there was so much criticism of the UN, the Central Committee should make a clear statement about the significance of the UN – he saw this as part of our responsibility in the world today. He felt that only to receive the document was not sufficient. Dr Kässmann responded that the Central Committee was being asked not only to receive the background document but to adopt the recommendations it contained.

Metr. Chrysostomos wished to make clear the different roles of the United Nations and the World Council of Churches: the UN's priorities were the political and economic dimensions, while for the WCC the stress was on the moral, ethical and spiritual dimensions.

With these clarifications, the Central Committee **agreed** to the recommendation.

8. Ecumenical Development Cooperative Society (EDCS):

The Unit III Committee recommended that Central Committee:

- *receive with appreciation a document The WCC and the EDCS¹³ which contained a recommendation by the Unit III Commission to increase the Council's investments in EDCS;*
- *commend EDCS for its good work, which was an important contribution to the mission of Christians and churches in economic life;*
- *acknowledge that the WCC has a significant role to play by demonstrating, through its investment policies, the ecumenical commitment to building economic arrangements which are socially just and environmentally sound;*
- *resolve that by the year 2000, 10% of the General Funds available for investment and other appropriate funds be invested in EDCS, and that in 1996, 5% of the General Funds balances available for investment and other appropriate funds be invested in EDCS.*

Note: The Unit III Committee took note of the concern of the Finance Committee about using the Council's scarce undesignated and general funds at this time for the purpose of investment in the EDCS, since it could reduce resources available for the Council's own programmes. The Unit III Committee shared the Finance Committee's concern for the present financial situation of the WCC. Nevertheless it believed that the credibility of the WCC was at stake when, at the end of 1994, 0,18% of its total investments in shares and bonds was invested in EDCS (0,77% of its general funds).

Assuming a 5% financial return on investments in 1996, implementation of this proposal would reduce the overall financial return on the general funds by only 0,15% (from 5% to 4,85%) reducing the income from investments by CHF 24,000 (CHF 800.000 to CHF 776.000). At the same time, however, the investment in EDCS could create an estimated 200 jobs in productive enterprises of poor people.

Although an investment of 10% of the General Funds should, in the opinion of the Unit III Committee, be the goal, it realised that some time may be necessary to make the adjustment. For this reason, a four-year transition period (from 1996 to 2000) was suggested.

¹³ See Appendix XII - documents available on request (no.6.2)

The Unit Committee also took note of the fact that the investment policy of the WCC was currently under review. This, however, should not present an obstacle for the implementation of the basic principles outlined in the proposed resolution.

In discussion, it was noted that time was needed in order to give the necessary care to acting on this recommendation. There was general agreement that the Executive should be asked to implement it at its March 1996 meeting.

With several dissenting votes and some abstentions, the Central Committee **agreed** to the above recommendations.

The General Secretary underlined the significance of this recommendation, which he considered as representing a major breakthrough in the assessment of the investment policy and criteria for investment on the part of the Finance Committee. He was grateful for the dialogue that had taken place between Unit III and the Finance Committee, which had enabled Central Committee to adopt the recommendation. This was a good tribute to EDCS which would celebrate its 20th anniversary in 1995.

Mr Gert van Maanen, General Manager of EDCS, was invited to address the Central Committee.

On behalf of the EDCS family, he expressed appreciation for Central Committee's decision to increase the World Council's participation in EDCS, and even more for the act of recognition that led to this action. He recalled that twenty years ago EDCS was a dream – that the churches would have their own instrument to make their investments work for people who really needed it. Twenty years on, EDCS remained an absurdity in the eyes of bankers, but in the eyes of people involved in projects world-wide, EDCS was a reality. The granting of credit had made all the difference in helping these people to break out of the poverty trap.

The word credit comes from the Latin *credo* = an act of belief. EDCS believes in people and their capacity to manage and be in charge of their own destiny. The reward was that 90% of the loans were repaid – a higher percentage than for a commercial development bank. EDCS was known as the development bank of the WCC. US\$ 75 million was currently invested in projects of which US \$50 million had been repaid by people to whom others would not have given a loan.

Contributions to EDCS totalling some US\$ 70 million had come from more than 12,000 committed church members all over the world, and many churches had followed their example. The fact that WCC had agreed to invest a percentage of its funds in EDCS was a recognition of its belief in EDCS, and this was gratefully acknowledged.

9. Recommendations regarding the Programme to Overcome Violence (POV):

The Unit III Committee recommended to the Central Committee that:

- 9.1 *the focus of the POV should be building a culture of peace through practical means to overcome violence at different levels of society, and encouraging the churches to play a leading role in using non-violent means such as prevention, mediation, intervention and education to overcome violence in their particular contexts;*
- 9.2 *the programme should collect stories from different regions about the experiences of churches in overcoming violence;*
- 9.3 *the programme should include studies of the causes of violence, with special attention given to situations where churches or religious groups contribute to these causes; these should draw on the already existing material and experiences (for example, peace institutes);*
- 9.4 *the programme should encourage continuing attention to the theological and ecclesiological dimensions of violence (see minutes of Central Committee 1994, page 113, c.); this should relate to the WCC studies of the early seventies and already existing theological studies in various regions;*
- 9.5 *while the overcoming of violence should be a clear emphasis in all the units, the Programme to Overcome Violence should be a programme of Unit III: it should be given sufficient staff and resources to carry out its mandate;*
- 9.6 *early in 1996, a small consultation should be called to give further shape to the programme, drawing from previous background discussions, and in light of the focus in § 9.1 above.*

It was noted that the programme could only succeed to the degree that member churches also gave it priority in their own work.

In response to a question about the availability of resources to carry out the programme, Dr Kässmann said that efforts were being made to seek funds; there

was currently one staff person but this was not enough to meet all the expectations. She affirmed that special attention would be given to situations where church and/or other religious groups contribute to cases of violence.

Prof. Romanides mentioned the theology of violence that had historically been part of the tradition of some ancient churches; the Orthodox had been victims of this during the period of the Crusades. Some reference to this should be included. The Moderator agreed that this would be a legitimate concern in the context of church history, but in the context of a programme to overcome violence it could be misunderstood. He suggested that there be an inter-faith approach to the question of violence in religions.

The Central Committee **voted in favour** of this series of recommendations.

10. Population and Development

On issues related to Population and Development, as set out in a study document¹⁴, the Unit Committee recommended that:

- 10.1 the document be received and forwarded to the churches for their reflection and action (see also § 10.4 below);*
- 10.2 the WCC receive the responses from member churches, including theological reflections, implementation strategies and case studies of different local experiences on issues related to population and development;*
- 10.3 the final goal of this process would be to prepare a policy statement on the issue, to reflect on the ethical and theological principles undergirding the interlinking issues of population, development, environment and sexual and reproductive rights;*
- 10.4 the document be reworked before being sent to the churches, to include a paragraph on the impact of the UN Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing in September 1995, on issues related to development and sexual and reproductive rights.*

Dr Kässmann pointed out that the General Secretary had written to the member churches asking for reports on work they had done on this issue, or their views

¹⁴ See Appendix XII - Documents available on request (no.6.8 revised)

on this subject, but had received very few reactions. The Unit Committee therefore hoped that this document would draw some response from the churches on the basis of which a policy statement could be worked out.

Fr Kishkovsky expressed regret at the lack of response, but urged that the document be revised carefully to ensure that it was clear, with the arguments well set out. He indicated several points where clarification was necessary. Bishop Bue also counselled that particular care be taken in addressing the abortion issue; he felt the document was too important to be called into question by wording that might create misunderstandings.

Dr Kässmann affirmed that it was not a policy document, but one that invited responses from the churches in order to come to a policy statement in due course. The General Secretary felt that Central Committee would be wise not to impose a timetable that might create expectations that could not be met. A number of policy statements were in preparation prior to the Assembly, but there were no resources available in this case; however, responses from the churches could be received and work could be begun on the process towards a policy document.

The Central Committee **voted in favour** of the above recommendations.

11. Festival to mark the end of the Ecumenical Decade of the Churches in Solidarity with Women

The Unit III Committee recommended that:

- 11.1 the proposal to hold such a Festival be received and commended to the churches for follow-up;*
- 11.2 the Festival be held separately from the Eighth Assembly, dates and venue to be explored;*
- 11.3 in support of the Festival, national celebrations be held in all countries in the year 1998;*
- 11.4 a Sunday be set apart for a special Worship Service to mark the End of the Decade in 1998, coinciding with the Festival;*
- 11.5 the proposal of a new way of funding the event with contributions from women globally be encouraged; the Central Committee to call on the member churches to contribute financially to the Festival as a mark of solidarity with women.*

Mr Zau Yaw suggested that such a Festival be held in conjunction with the Assembly rather than separately, in order to save costs as well as the time and energy of participants. Dr Kässmann said this suggestion had been discussed by the Unit Committee, but since the APC had not been involved it was felt it would not be possible to integrate a festival of the kind envisaged – a gathering of some one thousand women who would not necessarily be delegates to the Assembly.

With one dissenting vote, the Central Committee **voted in favour** of the recommendations.

The General Secretary observed that through the Decade, and not least through the intensive visits made by teams to a number of member churches, some very sad and critical situations had been brought to light, not only in our societies but in our churches. He wished to make this remark because some of the contradictions with which we live were present among those attending Central Committee. He felt that not all members realised how real the situation was in relation to violence against women. There were still a number of men who pretended that this was not something that concerned them, that it did not exist in their church or in their country. He felt that Central Committee could not with good conscience adopt a resolution to prepare a festival/celebration unless it also faced this reality honestly. Some women had experienced this reality during this meeting. The purpose of the Decade was ultimately to enable all of us to celebrate the community of women and men, but it seemed that there was still a long way to go.

Barbara Bazett explained her reason for voting against the proposal. It seemed to her that there was very little to celebrate other than the fact that a start had been made on the process. She also asked why, if the churches were supposed to be in solidarity with women, the women needed to meet separately to celebrate that? In most churches this task of the churches was left to the women – so the result was women in solidarity with women. She too wanted to see a move towards the community of women and men in the church.

Dr Kässmann asserted that the festival was not only about celebrating; it would take up the serious aspects also.

12. Romania

The Unit Committee **received** with deep concern a report on the effects of the new law on schools on minority populations and churches in Romania. According to the report, this law discriminates against linguistic minorities by severely limiting instruction in schools, vocational colleges and universities in their native languages, and, up to now, forbids the Protestant churches to organize their own schools. Concern was also expressed with respect to Protestant ownership of church properties which still remain – in this post-Communist period – in the hands of the state.

With regard to the specific reference to the return of properties owned by Protestant churches, Ms Rei pointed out that the Orthodox Church had also not yet received back many of its properties that had been taken over by the state, so was in the same situation as the Protestant churches. She did not feel it would help ecumenism in Romania if reference were made to one group of churches only. The Central Committee voted to delete the phrase in question by 44 votes to 25 against and 6 abstentions.

The Central Committee **agreed** to the following recommendation, as amended:

*that the General Secretary **be requested** to attend to these questions, in dialogue with the member churches in Romania, and in discussion with state authorities.*

13. East Timor

The Unit III Committee **adopted** the following minute related to programmatic follow-up on East Timor and **informed** Central Committee of its action:

The East Timor issue has been on the ecumenical agenda for about two decades –since 1975 – when the Indonesian forces occupied the territory. The World Council of Churches has from time to time issued statements and taken other actions to address the situation in East Timor.

In April 1992 a Joint WCC/CCA ecumenical team visited East Timor at the invitation of the Communion of Churches in Indonesia (PGI). On the recommendation of the team, a joint WCC/CCA Task Group was set up to address the situation in the territory in relation to:

- finding a just and peaceful resolution;
- addressing the human rights situation.

In pursuance of the above objectives, an ecumenical consultation was convened in December 1994 in Hong Kong by the Joint Task Group¹⁵. Prior to the consultation an ecumenical delegation was to visit East Timor. However, in view of the refusal of the Indonesian authorities to grant permission, the visit did not materialize.

In view of more recent developments, the situation in East Timor has deteriorated. There have been attacks by the East Timorese youth on places of worship belonging to the Muslim and Protestant communities. It is said that this is due to the large influx of immigrants (transmigrants) into the territory that has caused resentment in the local population. Bishop Belo, the Apostolic administrator of Dili Diocese of the Roman Catholic Church, has apologized to the two communities.

These developments are part of the larger issue facing the people of East Timor in their struggle for justice and peace and should not be viewed merely as inter-religious conflict among the people of East Timor.

Under the circumstances, the Unit III Committee has urged the WCC/CCA Task Group to address the East Timor issue with a renewed sense of urgency, in close cooperation with PGI and Gereja Kristen di Timor Timur. Efforts should be intensified to make contact with the Roman Catholic Church in the territory to initiate dialogue to pave the way for inter-religious cooperation in the larger interest of the struggle of the East Timor people.

14. Consolidated Africa Programme

The Unit III Committee **noted** the need for information on the next steps of implementation of the programme and its organizational location.

Dr Larsson asked for some background to this statement. The Africa Programme was referred to in the Unit III Activities Report and in the minutes of the Executive Committee, but she had the impression that the programme did not

¹⁵ The report of the consultation is available from Unit III - CCIA

have a clear organisational location. She was concerned that, after its prominence in the Johannesburg meeting, this programme may be losing its earlier impulse.

The General Secretary affirmed that the programme was indeed going ahead and much had happened over the past eighteen months in both Unit III and Unit IV, but there had been some lack of coordination between their different emphases. Efforts were underway to ensure greater coordination, and consultation was taking place with members of the Executive from Africa about the next steps to be taken in order to ensure maximum coordination between the different partners.

The Central Committee received the report of Unit III Committee with appreciation.

Dr Koshy referred to the plenary session on **Global Governance** which had taken place after the meetings of the Unit Committees, which meant that the concerns expressed there had not found a place in any of the Unit reports. He moved.

that Unit III be asked to take up for consideration and appropriate action the concerns expressed during the debate on Global Governance.

The Central Committee **agreed**. The General Secretary expressed appreciation for this supportive action.

Metr. Chrysostomos explained that he had sent in a written recommendation regarding the situation in **Albania**. He moved that this be approved:

The Central Committee took note with concern about the new legislation on schools which continued to prohibit religious minorities from setting up their own schools; it requested the General Secretary to give attention to this question in consultation with the state authorities in Albania with a view to obtaining full recognition of the rights of minorities in the context of human rights.

The General Secretary pointed out that the modalities would have to be worked out, but the Council was in contact with the Greek-speaking Orthodox Church in Albania, and this would be a supportive measure for a concern that is well-known.

The Central Committee **agreed** to this recommendation.

REPORT OF UNIT IV COMMITTEE

SHARING AND SERVICE

Dr Nababan, presiding, invited Bishop Gomez, Moderator of the Committee, to present the report. He expressed thanks to the staff for the clarity of their presentation of material which enabled the Committee to deal with so many matters.

Introduction

The Unit IV Committee began with an overview of the tasks and business of Central Committee from the perspective of the Vision and Mandate of Unit IV. The Committee commended the Unit for the clarity and coherence of the work being developed, as outlined in the framework document *Strategy for Jubilee*¹⁶. Having appraised itself of the Unit's vision and direction, the Committee turned to the business of Central Committee and considered three inter-related documents concerning the vision, identity and future directions of the Council – the Common Understanding and Vision process, the Eighth Assembly, and the role of WCC in the international community, especially in relation to the United Nations Organization. Finally, it considered some of the special issues being highlighted during this Central Committee in deliberative plenaries as well as through public issues.

The report was in two parts:

1. presentation of the comments and recommendations of the Committee on the broad questions of vision and direction,
2. comments and recommendations of a practical nature, reflecting the Mandate of Unit IV: «to promote human dignity and sustainable community through practical actions of solidarity.»

¹⁶ Copies available from Unit IV

1. *Common Understanding and Vision*

1.1 **Unit IV Vision and Mandate – Strategy for Jubilee**

The Unit Committee commended to Central Committee the change of emphasis in Unit IV's work focusing on the emerging Agenda for Development and, in this context, the new interpretation being given to the ecumenical commitment to a just sharing of resources.

1.2 In the light of experiences in implementing development strategies over the last 50 years it was important that the ecumenical movement reassess its approach to development. Unit IV's commitment to sharing was based on its understanding of the human person as created in God's image, and respect for the diversity of resources needed (at social, cultural, spiritual, ecological and economic levels) in order to create sustainable communities. Unit IV's document *Strategy for Jubilee*, which the Committee had studied, should provide the basis between the present time and the Eighth Assembly for developing a more profound understanding of the diversity of resources needed to achieve human dignity and sustainable community.

1.3 On recommendation of the Unit IV Committee,

the Central Committee recommended that the emerging Agenda for Development and its relation to the «Ecumenical Guidelines for Sharing» (El Escorial, 1987) be taken into account in the development of the Ecumenical charter for the 21st Century.

Bishop Gomez indicated that three sub-groups had considered documents relating respectively to the Common Understanding and Vision process, the Eighth Assembly and the minute on the 50th Anniversary of the United Nations. Comments and proposals were submitted in writing to the General Secretariat Committee and to Unit III. The main points were summarised as follows:

a) **Common Understanding and Vision process:**

- work done so far on the Common Understanding and Vision process was appreciated;
- concern was expressed that the process would safeguard the integrity of the WCC as a Council of Churches, whilst embracing and strengthening the relationship with other bodies, confessional, ecumenical and other faiths;

- it was hoped that the process would help to avoid duplication and strengthen cooperation between the global and regional expressions of the one ecumenical movement;
- there was some expectation that the relationship with the Roman Catholic Church would be significantly deepened within the framework of the Common Understanding and Vision process.

b) WCC Eighth Assembly

- the proposed outline and design of the next assembly was appreciated;
- emphasis was placed on the absolute importance of regional preparation using the regular meetings and structures which the Units can utilise, such as Round Tables and Regional groups as well as special orientation gatherings;
- the importance of the assembly Bible studies was recognised as a key means for local congregations to enter into the assembly theme and process; those planning studies were urged to rethink the way in which the diaconal ministry of the Church was being depicted, especially in study 5: mutuality, diversity of resources and transformation through a holistic development should be the emphasis. The jubilee theme was capable of enriching and widening the definition of diaconia, beyond the unhelpful yet all too common notions of paternalism and charity done to others;
- clarification should be sought from the APC on a series of practical/logistical concerns relating to publications, participation, special plenaries and hearings.

c) Global Governance

- the opportunity to mark the 50th Anniversary of the United Nations was appreciated;
- the need for the United Nations to strengthen its work towards the goal of independence for colonised people was stressed; references in the United Nations documentation to this «post colonial period» hide the fact that people are still oppressed by colonial powers and need support through international solidarity in their struggle for dignity and sustainability, e.g. Puerto Rico, French Polynesia, Palestine, etc;
- more emphasis should be given in our work with the United Nations to ensuring the participation of small States;
- more active participation of member churches in lobbying and advocating with their national governments was recommended;

Unit IV could support this through information resources and education for effective participation;

- it was noted that Unit IV had primary responsibility for relating to the UNHCR, DHA, UNICEF and ILO within the overall coordination of the international affairs team (Unit III);
- it was recommended that Unit IV must engage with the United Nations in its work on the Agenda for Development, ensuring the engagement and participation of member churches in this issue;
- closer cooperation with Unit III was urged in taking up the call for greater accountability of the Bretton Woods institutions.

At this point in the presentation of the report, a short video was shown depicting several brief interviews with members of Central Committee, responding to questions posed in the video shown in the context of the plenary session on Uprooted People.

2. *Working for Human Dignity and Sustainable Community*

2.1 Uprooted people

The Unit IV Committee reviewed the draft Central Committee Statement on Uprooted People, together with several proposed revisions suggested by members of Central Committee. It considered the need to prompt immediate action to implement the statement on Uprooted People, and proposed recommendations which the Central Committee **agreed** as follows:

- a. *to adopt the Statement A Moment to Choose: Risking to be with Uprooted People*; (see Appendix IV)
- b. *to call on member churches and related agencies:*
 - *to study, affirm and adopt the Central Committee Statement A Moment to Choose: Risking to be with Uprooted People*;
 - *to manifest the commitment of the churches to be on the side of uprooted people by witnessing and serving at all levels of the life of the church*;
 - *to indicate how the WCC and the ecumenical family can support them in the implementation of this statement*;
 - *to submit a progress report to the General Secretary by mid-1997 on actions taken.*

- c. *In order to facilitate the reception and implementation of the statement on Uprooted People, it **invited the churches** to mark 1997 as an Ecumenical year for churches in solidarity with the uprooted.*

The WCC Units were requested to facilitate the member churches in making 1997 a special year for focusing on the rights of uprooted people. Actions could include:

- engaging locally with uprooted people to carry out a ministry of witness and service;
 - developing strategies of awareness raising, education and advocacy;
 - coordinating public campaigns where appropriate for the protection of refugees, internally displaced and migrants, and for the promotion and implementation of relevant international instruments;
 - assessing and implementing the UNHCR guidelines on the protection of women and children refugees;
 - protecting boys and girls in particular by preventing trafficking and internal displacement;
 - advocating for indigenous and colonized peoples to remain on or return to their lands;
 - supporting local and international initiatives for worship, education and action;
 - motivating local and international initiatives focusing on justice, conflict resolution and peacemaking, as a means of preventing forced displacement.
- d. *It **invited** member churches to take immediate action to ensure the safety and reintegration of returnees and internally displaced, by collecting signatures through local congregations to protest the manufacturing of anti-personnel mines and urge for the immediate clearance of existent mines. Target: several million signatures by mid-1996.*
- e. *It **requested** Unit IV to convene an international expert group to consider and propose practical solutions for the reintegration of returnees who find themselves displaced in their own countries (such as Afghanistan, Angola, Bougainville, Cambodia, Cyprus, Ex-Yugoslavia, Rwanda, Sri Lanka).*

Ms Welch expressed concern about adopting recommendations without knowing whether it was possible to achieve what they said. She asked whether some preparation might be done prior to the next Central Committee to enable members to come to more realistic priorities about programmes. All Units had a number of possibilities which they would wish to propose but it appeared that the decision was in the hands of the Finance Committee. She felt that Central Committee should make these decisions and be in a position to prioritise about what they can commit themselves to do as churches.

Ms Blyth responded that the Unit IV Committee had considered the budget available for the various tasks proposed and were satisfied that the necessary funds were available.

2.2 Ecumenical Ethics and Humanitarianism

The Unit IV Committee welcomed the establishment of the new emergency response network, **Action By Churches Together (ACT-International)** as an historic initiative within the Ecumenical Movement to work and witness together to situations of human suffering and injustice. ACT's mission statement says: **«Through our cooperative presence in situations of human suffering we seek to present a vision of restored human community which we believe is God's intention for the human family...and we seek to learn the lessons of emergencies, sharing our knowledge to further peace and reconciliation.»**

The Unit IV Committee recommended the following resolutions for adoption, which the Central Committee **agreed**:

- a. *to **request** the General Secretary (in consultation with the Lutheran World Federation) to initiate a process of enquiry into the urgent ethical questions of humanitarianism currently facing the churches working in complex emergency situations. Such a special committee on ethics and humanitarianism should enable member churches to reflect together and to advise on how the ecumenical family might stand together more effectively as advocates for justice, peace and reconciliation in conflict-related disasters.*

(Terms of reference for this Special Committee could include hard questions analysis and study of such issues as genocide, violence and warfare between ethnic groups, mass exodus of refugees and displaced persons, collapse of governance and civil justice systems, impunity, churches' role in the prevention of civil strife, role of mass media in fund-raising and the existing structures and rules of humanitarian intervention in complex emergencies).

The Committee considered it a scandal that valuable and scarce aid and development budgets of churches and governments were increasingly being diverted to short-term relief. The Unit IV Committee was also deeply concerned that fund-raising methods based on the suffering and indignities inflicted on the innocent and media manipulation of stories set priorities for emergency response, relegating some to high profile and others to insignificance,

The Central Committee further **agreed**

- b. *to request churches and related agencies to commit themselves to using 10% of all emergency budgets for justice, peace and reconciliation initiatives and for long-term development, especially in areas where under-development was identified as a direct cause for political instability.*
- c. *to request the new ACT structure to give a high staff priority to:*
 - *prevention of potentially violent conflict crises through early-warning systems based on accurate and timely dissemination of information from the affected areas with special emphasis on local and national church sources;*
 - *capacity-building of local and national churches, as a way of respecting the right of local churches and communities to resolve problems and identify solutions for themselves.*

Dr Larsson asked how this recommendation related to Unit III, and where its emphasis was intended to be. She warned against creating any kind of structure that might run parallel to CCIA, for example.

Ms Blyth assured her that there were weekly meetings between ACT and CCIA to avoid any possible overlap. The intention of this recommendation was rather to reflect a concern that ACT not become merely an operational body that takes action after an event, but rather one that could anticipate such an event in advance and tries to take preventive action.

Metropolitan Chrysostomos felt that, in connection with the return of uprooted people to their homes, some mention should be made to the problems involved in ownership of property. It was a delicate matter which should not be ignored.

3.1 Developing economic alternatives

The Unit Committee addressed the issue of developing economic alternatives. It considered the benefits of the use of credit in promoting human dignity and sustainable community and noted a wide variety of initiatives currently being supported in the regions. However, it also noted that loans represent a very small percentage of the total ecumenical sharing of resources. The Committee noted the achievements of ECLOF, the complementarity of loans and grants, and the importance in a holistic approach of making training an integral part of credit and loan schemes. For the future, it noted that serious consideration would need to be given to identifying situations where loans would be preferable to grants, and to identifying lending capital resources to support credit initiatives including the expanding ECLOF credit programme.

The Unit Committee recommended, and **Central Committee agreed:**

to adopt the special minute on the 50th Anniversary of ECLOF, and acknowledge its thanks to current and past staff who have promoted this alternative economic programme (see Appendix VIII).

4.1 The development of the Maohi people in the face of renewed nuclear testing

The Committee noted that, after a moratorium of approximately three years, the French Government resumed nuclear testing in the Pacific on 5 September 1995.

WCC member churches in the Pacific had taken a lead in alerting the world to the danger of the testing programme. The Maohi people of these Pacific churches suffer the most immediate impact to their health, their environment, their culture and their identity. In the long term, root causes such as colonialism and failed development must be confronted and overcome.

In the immediate, the Central Committee was urged to engage member churches –including the churches of France – in taking urgent actions to stop the testing programme. It **agreed:**

to commend to the Churches the report: «The Churches and Nuclear Testing in the Pacific»; and urged the churches to implement actions suggested in the report.

Possible actions might include:

- Member churches and NCCs were asked to organise their own days of prayer and fasting in solidarity with the churches and people of French Polynesia (the General Secretary was requested to make this request in a personal letter);
- CC members were urged to take multiple copies of postcards and the report entitled «The Churches and Nuclear Testing in the Pacific» for distribution to their congregations (available on request from Unit IV);
- given the current problem of obtaining accurate news, an ecumenical communicator should be placed in Tahiti to ensure the flow of information and news reporting to the wider global community;
- Member church support should be given to the establishment of an independent health commission to investigate the impact of the testing programme on the well-being of French Polynesia and to support the application of international legal procedures to stop the testing programme;
- Central Committee was asked to promote links between groups around the world to build solidarity between all the Peoples impacted by nuclear testing programmes.

Footnote:

A delegation from the Evangelical Church of French Polynesia met with President Chirac on Thursday 21 September 1995.

It was recommended that Central Committee walk to the gates of the Palais des Nations on that day and make a public statement opposing the tests. It was resolved that the international press should be notified.

Bishop Gomez concluded his presentation of the Unit IV report by expressing the Committee's thanks to members of Central Committee and staff who participated in the march to the Palais des Nations (see reference also under Public Issues, p. 43).

The Central Committee *received* the report of Unit IV Committee with appreciation.

REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Dr Nababan, presiding, invited Ms Birgitta Rantakari, moderator of the Finance Committee, to present the report. She referred to her preliminary report delivered at the beginning of the meeting (p. 15-16), and noted that a «financial hearing» had taken place during CC in which a number of detailed points were clarified.

Ms Rantakari made it plain that the Finance Committee did not feel that the Council was in such a financial crisis as it was in 1991, provided that urgent pro-active steps were taken immediately to control the situation. Steps already taken included a consultation of major donors which urged the Council «to improve its relationships and communication with its member churches and its image in the world». They also stressed the importance of all member churches making a fair membership contribution to safeguard the Council's basic infrastructure.

A consultation on auditing concerns had also taken place, one of the results of which was a new form for the Financial Report that adheres to international accounting standards as far as these are relevant for the WCC; it also requested more transparent reports and controls relating to donor funds and their use.

As requested by the Canberra Assembly, a «more dynamic investment policy» had been pursued, which had been evaluated at the end of 1994 after three years, when it was judged that the process should continue for a further three year period. A staff group on Investment and Exchange policy had also been working on a number of details, and would report to Central Committee in 1996. In addition, new accounting policies were in place as well as a new computer programme (Scala).

The Finance Committee was asking that an integrated strategic plan be set out, to include programme priorities, human resources, and working styles, with ideas for making the best use of the limited funds available. A process had been initiated under the leadership of the Deputy General Secretary (Programmes) to develop a three-year plan to stabilise income and expenditure in the period up to the Eighth Assembly, encouraging Programme Units to prioritise their activities and integrate programme planning with resources available.

In the longer term, the Council's financial stewardship must be part of the Common Understanding and Vision process, which was asking questions about the kind of Council the churches want in the 21st century. So there must be creative initiatives to respond to these new requirements.

The most pressing concern of the Finance Committee was the shortfall in undesignated income (UDI) which was necessary to support the core work of the Council (Unit I and the Offices of Relationships and Communication). Action must be taken to develop member church contributions from those who have not paid their share in the past, and to continue to seek other sources of income.

Ms Rantakari presented the report of the Finance Committee as follows:

1. The General Situation

Modest operating surpluses had been achieved in 1991, 1992 and 1993, enabling funds and reserves to be built up. The disappointing results in 1994 were due to the strength of the Swiss franc against major donor currencies, the poor performance of investment portfolios and the financial problems facing some contributors. This had not been due to over-spending, as expenditure was strictly controlled and funds and reserves were sufficient to meet the shortfall of income during 1994 and the current year.

Two main issues had to be addressed:

- the Council would always have to face short term fluctuations in its financial fortunes; at present it was at a low point. The Finance Committee and staff aimed to ensure that fluctuations were contained without substantially affecting the Council's programmes and other work.
- more serious was the 10 year downward trend in the Council's income in real terms which would fundamentally affect the Council's planning and must be recognised and addressed by Governing Bodies in their future planning.

2. 1994 Financial Report and Accounts

The new style of presentation of the report and accounts was commended for its clarity and transparency. However, due to the factors indicated in the report, the figures contained were disappointing and showed a substantial reduction in total funds from CHF 112 million in 1993 to CHF 88 million in 1994. In the General Funds the operating shortfall had been CHF 3.4 million, whilst CHF 9.1 million represented losses on exchange and decline in investment values

(though some of this was unrealised and had been recovered since). CHF 1.8 million of the Exchange Equalisation Reserve had to be used for the first time to compensate Units for a shortfall in income due to their contributions coming in below the long term budget rates, leaving a balance of CHF 2 million.

3. Budget review 1995

The Finance Committee reviewed the 1995 budget. On the advice of the Investment Advisory Group (IAG) the long term budget rates were adjusted (for the first time since 1990). A shortfall of CHF 5.3 million was indicated, but staff had identified savings of CHF 2.6 million. Units II, III and IV fund balances could absorb CHF 1.4 million, leaving a shortfall of CHF 1.3 million in undesignated income (UDI) to be taken from the Council's General Reserve (currently standing at CHF 6.3 million).

4. Revised 1996 budget

Using the revised budget exchange rates, the shortfall would amount to CHF 2.8 million. Of this, CHF 229,000 could be drawn from the Units II, III and IV fund balances, leaving a UDI shortfall of CHF 2.6 million. The approved number of staff posts at 1 January 1996 (on which the budget was based, adjusted for an anticipated 5% vacancies) was 271 persons or 238.85 full time equivalents. Swiss inflation rate was 2.1% for the previous twelve months. Staff were engaged in a process of examining priorities and identifying savings to reduce the shortfall.

5. Provisional 1997 budget

According to the Rules of the Council, the Finance Committee was expected to present to Central Committee a **1997 provisional budget**. However, the preliminary budget information available was too uncertain for this to be meaningful in view of the work being done to review priorities and expenditure. A proposal would be submitted to the Executive Committee in March 1996.

6. Income projections and donor trends

For 1994, the General Account income of the Units came in much as predicted, but some CHF 1.9 million below budget. Total General (programme) income for the Units amounted to CHF 20.172 million. Some 38% of the loss in the Units' general income (CHF 3.275 million) was due to fluctuation in exchange rates, 12.8% of the losses occurred because of donor contribution reductions, 45% represented losses because of negative returns on investment income and 4.2% was due to other causes.

The income in **membership contributions** and other **undesigned givings** also dropped between 1993 and 1994. Whereas in 1993 the Council had received some CHF 6.649 million in UDI, the actual UDI income in 1994 was only CHF 6.365, some CHF 284,000 less than in the previous year.

With regard to more specific **income projections**, OICD's current projections were based on the 22 most important contributors to the WCC's programmes and activities. In 1994 the income received for general accounts of the units totalled CHF 20.172 million. For 1995 OICD was predicting an income reduction in the general accounts (budgeted versus actuals) of approximately 3.5 to 5% and for 1996 (compared to 1995), a drop of 2.5 to 4% in the general income at budget rates.

7. The way forward

Having considered all the information available, the Finance Committee recognised that there was an immediate problem due to market conditions. It noted the review of the 1995 budget and encouraged all Units and Offices in their efforts to contain expenditure within the resources available during the current year. It welcomed the wider review process currently being undertaken by staff and asked particularly that the coordination of the publications of Units and the Office of Communications be considered, also the Language Service, with a view to rationalisation and economies.

In the longer term the Committee was concerned about the more basic income trends which had emerged. It was clear that, with more than 50% of member churches not making any financial contribution to the Council and other general income not keeping up with the low rate of Swiss inflation, the Council's infrastructure and core programmes were being starved of resources. This must be addressed during the coming period by the establishment of clear programme priorities, a concerted effort to increase income, particularly membership contributions, and by staff action on the management of resources, reviewing investment and exchange policies and the production of a three year financial plan.

The Finance Committee drew the attention of the Unit and General Secretariat Committees to the steadily reducing income available to the Council in real terms and asked that they base their programme recommendations on the resources available. However, it was also anxious that the apparent downward trend in financial support for the Council be taken into account as part of the Common Understanding and Vision process as it examined issues such as the rationalisation

of ecumenical and confessional instruments, the decentralisation of some of the Council's work and the impact of the revolution in information technology for the 21st century.

Ms Rantakari moved the following recommendations, which were **agreed**:

The Central Committee:

- 1) **approved** the 1994 Financial Report and Accounts;
- 2) **approved** the 1996 budget provisionally on the understanding that further work would be done by the staff to identify savings, and that a revised budget would be presented to the Executive Committee in March 1996 in which the overall shortfall should be greatly reduced or eliminated;
- 3) **asked** that a preliminary 1997 budget be prepared for consideration by the Executive Committee in March 1996;
- 4) **also asked** that a three year strategic plan be prepared for the whole period up to the Eighth Assembly, taking into account programmes, working practices, personnel and financial resources;
- 5) **agreed** that, in light of the current financial situation, until the Eighth Assembly, its meetings be held in Geneva, and that consideration be given to the cost of venues for Executive Committees, Commissions and other meetings with a view to effecting savings;
- 6) **noted** the concern of the Finance Committee regarding the long term reduction in the Council's income and particularly in undesignated, member church contributions, and **asked** that those responsible for the Common Understanding and Vision process take this into account in their formulation of plans for the future of the Council.

Dr Wilkens urged that, in the attempt to effect savings, particular efforts be made to see whether some specific programmatic and administrative areas of work could be combined with similar work done by other organisations in the Centre.

8. Eighth Assembly Budget

The Finance Committee considered the third draft of the Eighth Assembly budget. Although many figures could not yet be accurately estimated because full information was not available, the Committee was satisfied with the overall expenditure budget of CHF 12 million, a considerable saving having been made by moving the venue from the city centre site to the University of Zimbabwe campus. Changes in the style of the Assembly had been taken into account as far as they could be quantified. Out of 330 churches and agencies asked to contribute towards the Assembly, only 60 pledges had been received so far. Staff

were asked to review the policy of charging executive staff travel to the Council’s general budget rather than to the Assembly budget and to report whether a change in policy would be possible within the budget limit.

On recommendation of the Finance Committee, *the Central Committee*

- 7) *accepted the third draft Budget for the Eighth Assembly (June 1995) based on an anticipated net expenditure of CHF 12 million;*
- 8) *noted the report on pledging for the Eighth Assembly, and:*
 - *asked its members to ensure that the churches they represent respond to the request for a pledged contribution to the Assembly budget,*
 - *urged all member churches which have not already done so to send their pledge as soon as possible, and*
 - *reminded those churches which have pledged that it would be helpful if they sent their payments as early as possible to enable the Council to meet expenses which have already begun to occur.*

9. Ecumenical Development Initiative (EDI)

The EDI was set up after the Seventh Assembly as a joint venture between the WCC and NCCCUSA in order to seek new sources of funding for the ecumenical ministries of both Councils. An evaluation of its first four years was undertaken in the autumn of 1994 and a meeting of representatives of both bodies met in July 1995. The Finance Committee received reports from its representatives at that meeting and from Dr A. Pennybacker, President of EDI.

The Atlanta event in February 1995 in honour of Archbishop Iakovos had been a success and thanks were expressed to the EDI staff, especially to Dr Maxine Garrett. Fund-raising, particularly for ecumenical ministries, was currently slow and difficult in the USA because of conservative tendencies in church and community. However, over the period of EDI some \$4 million had been raised or pledged and there was confidence now that it would go forward, though under-resourced for its task. Dr Pennybacker reported gifts and pledges as follows:

	US \$
1. Cash gifts from churches & individuals	715,813
2. Pledges of cash gifts	216,000
3. Bequest pledges	500,000
4. Annuities	40,000

5. Trust created by life insurance	500,000
6. Foundation grants	878,702
7. Americorps grant for Urban Ministries	<u>1,300,000</u>
TOTAL	4,150,515

The seeking of funds was balanced between the WCC and the NCCC, the general principle being that undesignated funds would be equally divided. However, some funds received had specific designations which must be respected.

On recommendation of the Finance Committee, *the Central Committee*

9) *noted the report on the Ecumenical Development Initiative (EDI) in the USA, welcomed the success of the Archbishop Iakovos celebration event in February 1995 and agreed that:*

- *EDI should continue for a further period, at least until the WCC Eighth Assembly, as a joint venture with the NCCCUSA,*
- *the WCC should continue to make funding available on the existing basis (US \$ 120,000 pa) until 31 December 1998,*
- *the governance of EDI should remain in the hands of the two general secretaries and be exercised as they determine, and that the Finance Sub-Committee of the Executive Committee should appoint representatives to participate in a small group jointly with the NCCCUSA to meet at least once a year to consider the plans and goals of EDI and to monitor progress in achieving them.*

At the suggestion Dr Kässmann, it was agreed to add the following additional point:

- *that a report of actual income received from EDI into the budget of the WCC be reported to Central Committee each year.*

10. Member church contributions

The Office for Income Coordination and Development (OICD) had continued its efforts to intensify communication with member churches regarding membership contributions. A new **Giving Index** had been developed, ranking all member churches according to their actual giving, size and the national wealth of the respective country (Gross National Product per capita = GNP). This was a useful tool to determine the «fair share» of a member church; it highlighted those churches which are small, which are from low income countries, but which contribute a significant amount. In the case of the 166 non-payers in 1994, OICD would try to collect a total of CHF 2 million. The system automatically

calculates the contribution desired from this group according to size and national wealth. The Finance Committee felt that each church should at least make a minimum annual contribution to the Council.

The **Membership Reminder System (MRS)** had been in operation in OICD for over a year. It was still too early to evaluate it but it appeared to be a valuable communications tool and would keep churches aware of their responsibilities. Twenty-one more churches paid a contribution in 1994 (147) compared to 1993 (126). The number of non-payers in 1994 (166 or 52% of the total membership) remained high, but with a percentage of non-payers in 1993 at 61% (194), some progress was being made.

Whilst some churches may be unable to increase their giving from their ordinary revenue budget, they may have substantial capital assets and might be persuaded to contribute from these on a one-time basis. OICD was asked to pursue this possibility.

In the light of discussions on criteria for membership and recommendations arising from the Financial Consultation in February 1995, the Finance Committee felt that more explicit rules should be made regarding financial contributions.

On recommendation of the Finance Committee, *the Central Committee*

- 10) *welcomed the systematic approach to membership contributions instituted by OICD based on the «giving index» formula proposed by OICD, and approved it as a guideline and tool for the assessment and collection of membership contributions;*
- 11) *agreed that a minimum membership contribution of CHF 1,000 per annum be made by each church as part of its responsibilities of membership in the Council, and that churches which cannot comply with the full amount requested according to the giving index be asked to contribute a minimum between CHF 1,000 and that amount to be determined in negotiation with OICD;*
- 12) *further agreed that all member churches should be informed that, unless they contribute an agreed amount as a **minimum annual contribution** from 1996, they could not expect to be eligible for subsidies for travel and accommodation for their representatives attending the Eighth Assembly and for meetings of governing bodies thereafter.*

11. Other Income Development Activities

OICD had continued to work with the programme units on standardised reports, with some good results. OICD currently coordinates about 15 annual funding requests and reports to major donors. The **Resource Sharing Book (RSB)**, which includes programme descriptions submitted by the units valid for the coming year as well as information on the previous year's activities, is the basis for all the Council's requests and reports compiled by OICD. As fund-raising, communication and information-sharing go hand in hand, OICD was challenged to develop materials which explain the WCC's endeavours in an uncomplicated and effective way.

OICD had taken the initiative to explore new funding sources in Asia (reported at the Executive Committee in February 1995) and Europe (Germany and the UK). It was hoped that there would be further developments in Korea following the General Secretary's recent visit. European Commission funds need to be further explored. Securing staff secondments may develop into another OICD task in the near future. An **Advisory Group on Income Development** was being established as recommended by the Finance Consultation in February as a resource for OICD.

*13) The Central Committee **noted** the new initiatives taken by OICD, **encouraged** continued development along these lines and **drew attention** to the need for renewed efforts to develop the Council's income in every way possible. It asked for an annual progress report.*

12. Consultations

The Finance Committee considered the report of the **Donors' Consultation on Finances** held in February 1995, noted its recommendations and heard that action was being taken on a number of them. The Committee also received a report of the **Audit Consultation** held in March 1995, which had proved worthwhile but its recommendations would be demanding on the Council. The Audit Committee was asked to arrange a follow-up consultation in 1996 with a full report at its following meeting.

13. The Audit Committee had met in June and would meet again in September. It had a heavy agenda in view of recent changes in accounting practices and the computer programme; it was glad to note that the relevant International Accounting Standards were being applied as far as possible and that improvements were being made in the Council's financial management and controls.

14) The Central Committee agreed

that Klynfeld Peat Marwick Goerdeler, SA, (KPMG), be reappointed auditors for the 1995 accounts of the World Council of Churches.

14. The Investment Advisory Group met in April and July; it reviewed the budget exchange rates that had been used for the last four years and suggested revised rates, which have been used for the 1995 review and the 1996 revised budget.

After their very poor performance in 1994, portfolios appeared to be picking up in 1995 and it was hoped there would be a positive result to the year with some investment income to distribute, though the IAG had warned that markets would remain uncertain for some time.

An evaluation of the Council's investment policies and the performance of its portfolios was undertaken in November 1994 by a group of experts, moderated by Dr Maxine Garrett. Its conclusion was that overall performance and management had improved significantly since the Canberra Assembly, but recommended some changes which were in process of being implemented. A staff group on Investment and Exchange Policy had been set up and was working on a policy paper for presentation at the next meeting of the Executive Committee.

15) The Central Committee agreed

that Ms R.A. Weber be appointed as a member of the Investment Advisory Group in place of Dr Thérèse Draper with effect from 1 October 1995.

The Central Committee received the report of the Finance Committee with appreciation.

STRUCTURE RELATED MATTERS

I. Structures, By-Laws, and other Business Items

The General Secretariat Committee gave consideration to a document dealing with matters related to structural review, revision of By-Laws, and some other matters. It accepted all the recommendations indicated in the text below, and *recommended* their adoption by Central Committee.

1. Structural Review

The report of the Advisory Group on Programmatic Reorganisation (Central Committee, September 1991) included the following clause:

In light of the implications of the restructuring, a process of review should be conducted to evaluate the new structure's effectiveness in achieving the hoped-for benefits. This review should be conducted three years after the new General Secretary takes office. (CC Minutes 1991, p.197).

Resulting from this recommendation, a staff group met and a report was submitted to the Executive Committee at its September 1994 meeting indicating that the new structure was basically working well, but that there were some specific matters which required modification. The Executive Committee asked the General Secretary to set up a small group to be convened by Prof. Aagaard, with three members from the Executive and three members from Central Committee, to consider the matter. This group reported in February and September 1995 to the Executive Committee, which recommended the following actions by the Central Committee:

1.1 Ecumenical Institute, Bossey

The recommendations concerning Bossey were transmitted to the Executive Committee for its further consideration (see pp. 194ff).

1.2 Office for Interreligious Relations

Within the new structure, an Office on Interreligious Relations (OIRR) was created to pursue the relationships aspect of the work of the former Sub-unit on Dialogue.

The theological aspects of the work of the former Sub-unit were given two locations within Programme Units, namely, Unit I (Theological significance of Judaism) and Unit II (Theology of Religions). These Units were to initiate programmes in these fields in collaboration with OIRR staff. The theological side of the inter-faith work, however, had suffered because the Units could not allocate the necessary staff time and resources to initiate programmes and the requisite expertise was lacking.

The Executive Committee believed that it would be more realistic to expect the OIRR itself, where the interest and expertise exists, to initiate these theological concerns and to work in collaboration with the relevant Units. This proposal was realistic also in view of the decision to add one executive staff person to the OIRR.

It was recommended that the OIRR be given the mandate to carry out the theological aspects of the work in inter-faith relations in cooperation with the relevant Programme Units.

The Central Committee **agreed**.

1.3 Responsibilities of Unit Committees and Commissions

A revision of the regulations and by-laws was approved by Central Committee in January 1994, and the relative relationships and responsibilities of Unit Committees and Commissions were spelled out in Section IV (*Responsibilities of Committees, Commissions, Boards, Working Groups and Advisory Groups*) (minutes, Appendix IV, pp.178ff). However, some people still look back to the many Sub-unit commissions under the former structure, whereas currently there are only four Unit Commissions with less direct authority but a more comprehensive remit.

The Advisory Group followed the approach suggested by the Cambridge Associates that Commissions be «purely advisory», with all decisions being taken by Central Committee, although some members wanted to upgrade the status of Working Groups to that of the former Sub-unit Commissions.

It was deemed necessary to strengthen the Commissions whilst ensuring the proper relationship between them and the Unit Committees. The report and recommendations from commission to unit committee should be carefully prepared to enable the committee to do its job without duplicating the role of the commission.

The Executive Committee felt that there was no need to revise the definition of responsibilities set out in Section IV of the rules and regulations; rather, it was necessary to get the structures working as intended. It should be made clear that, within the resources (of personnel and finance) approved by the Central Committee, commissions have the necessary flexibility to set priorities and direct the ongoing programmatic work of the Units.

It was recommended that

- 1. the attention of Unit Committees and Unit Commissions be drawn to the definition of their relative roles and responsibilities as set out in Section IV of the Rules, Regulations and By-Laws approved by Central Committee in January 1994 (Minutes, Appendix IV);*
- 2. it be reaffirmed that Central Committee is responsible for determining the general policy to be followed in the work of the programme units (Rules V 5.c). This includes the setting of overall priorities for the use of resources, including personnel and finance;*
- 3. Unit Commissions shall have freedom, within the policies and resources approved by the Central Committee, to set priorities within the Unit and to direct the ongoing programmatic work of the Units.*

The Central Committee **agreed**.

1.4 Officers of the Units

Some confusion remained about the definition of the Officers of the Unit set out in Section V «Regulations for the work of the Programme Units» § 6, approved in January 1994 (minutes, Appendix IV). The By-Laws Committee, in drafting the regulations, wanted to ensure good liaison and working relationships between unit committees and commissions while emphasising that Central Committee had the ultimate authority for decision-making. Regulation 2.3 guarantees this bridge between the Committee and the Commission.

Perhaps the most important function of the Officers of the Unit was in preparing the work of the unit committee. Practice varies in the units and there was some anxiety that this regulation might inhibit the functions of the commission and its moderators. However, it was stressed that Units were free to adopt such working guidelines as they consider necessary and to make provision for a Unit Executive (§ 11).

It was felt that no action was required on this matter at present (the regulations being sufficiently flexible to accommodate the needs of the Units), but that the matter should be kept under review in the light of experience.

1.5 Advisory Groups in the General Secretariat

In the Advisory Group's report (CC 1991), and in the rules and regulations (Section IV § 11 – CC minutes 1994, Appendix IV) the provisions for Advisory Groups had not proved entirely satisfactory in practice. After discussion by the Executive, it was felt that the position of the Advisory Groups should be made more explicit and brought into line with the Working Groups.

It was recommended:

1. *that the Advisory Groups for Interreligious Relations, Church and Ecumenical Relations, and Communication each be composed of 5 – 15 persons appointed by the Central Committee, and report to Central Committee through the Executive and General Secretariat Committees;*
2. *that the mandate of the Advisory Groups be:*
 - a) *to provide guidance for the work of the Offices of Inter-Religious Relations, Church and Ecumenical Relations, and Communication;*
 - b) *to advise the Central Committee and the General Secretary on inter-unit cooperation and communication within the Council;*
 - c) *to advise on and share in the task of interpreting the life and work of the Council to the churches and other partners in the ecumenical movement.*

The Central Committee **agreed**.

2. Rules of Debate

The Central Committee in January 1994 asked the Executive to review the Working Guide to the Rules of Debate in Central Committee and authorised it to recommend such revision as it considered appropriate. The Executive Committee did as requested and concluded that only minor modifications were required to bring them into line with current practice. These are spelled out in the chapter on **Changes in the Rules** and were voted on by Central Committee (see pp. 199ff of these minutes).

3. By-Laws of Faith and Order

At its meeting in January 1994, the Central Committee approved revised By-Laws for the Council «except for the By-Laws for Faith and Order contained

in section VI.A, for which final approval will be sought at the Central Committee meeting in 1995» (1994 minutes p.140). After consultation with the members of the Plenary Commission, as required by the existing By-Laws of Faith and Order, the Standing Commission formally approved the proposed amendments; the Central Committee was thus requested to give these its final approval:

that the By-Laws of Faith and Order (section VI.A of the draft submitted to Central Committee in January 1994) be approved.

The Central Committee **agreed**.

The General Secretariat Committee gave attention to two other **business matters**, as follows:

A. **Singapore Airlines** At the end of 1987 the Singapore Government expelled the Christian Conference of Asia from Singapore. At its meeting in Hanover in 1988, the Central Committee took a number of actions in protest against this procedure, including:

- «5. as a symbolic action in support of the CCA, [Central Committee] recommends that churches and their related agencies seriously consider abstaining from using Singapore Airlines and from holding ecumenical meetings in Singapore until
- a) there is a guarantee from the Singapore government that all accredited delegates are allowed to enter the country;
 - b) there is a guarantee of freedom of the press in Singapore;»

Seven years having passed since this action was taken, the CCA at its Assembly in June 1995, resolved:

«Relationship with Singapore Churches

The CCA underscores as an urgent priority the rebuilding of closer relationships with the churches in Singapore towards their eventual full, active and visible participation in the life of the ecumenical movement in Asia and the CCA in particular.

In order to foster the rebuilding of relationships and the revival of full membership of the Singapore churches in the CCA, it is proposed that the General Assembly revokes its symbolic boycott of Singapore Airlines and the ban on the holding of ecumenical meetings in Singapore, effective immediately.»

The Executive Committee considered the matter and referred it to the GS Committee for a proposal for action.

B. Shell Oil Company: Also during the 1988 meeting of Central Committee there was a discussion on the situation in Southern Africa. Attention was drawn to the international campaign to boycott Shell as part of the process to bring pressure to bear on the South African government over its repressive policies in South Africa and Namibia. It was agreed:

«4. [Central Committee] encourages the churches to support the international campaign to boycott the Shell Oil Corporation.»

In the light of the changed situation in Southern Africa and the lifting of all sanctions and other financial and economic pressure to end apartheid by the Central Committee in January 1994 (Minutes, Johannesburg, p.111), it was suggested that the Shell boycott might also be lifted at this time.

After consideration of these two actions, the General Secretariat Committee

recommended that the World Council of Churches end its boycott of Singapore Airlines, and resolve to withdraw its call to member churches to support the boycott of the Shell Oil Company in the light of the changed situation in South Africa.

The Central Committee **agreed**.

II. Structural Location of the Ecumenical Institute, Bossey – Recommendation from the Executive Committee

The Moderator invited Dr Nababan to introduce this item on behalf of the Executive Committee. For the sake of clarity, the facts had been spelled out in some detail, as follows:

1. The Executive Committee had submitted to the Central Committee a document containing recommendations on issues relating to structures and bylaws, which included a specific recommendation concerning the Ecumenical Institute, Bossey:

«a. that the Ecumenical Institute Bossey be moved from Unit I to come under the direct responsibility of the General Secretariat;

- b. that the Director report through the Deputy General Secretary (Programmes);*
- c. that the Bossey Board report to the Central Committee through the Executive Committee and the General Secretariat Committee; and*
- d. that the rules, regulations and by-laws of the Council be amended accordingly.»*

This matter was referred both to the Unit I Committee and to the General Secretariat Committee for consideration and response to the Executive Committee which was mandated to propose the final action to the Central Committee.

2. The recommendation was the result of a structure review process initiated by the Executive Committee in 1994 following the instructions in the report of the Advisory Group on Programmatic Reorganization (September 1991). In December 1994, a Structure Review Group under the leadership of Prof. Anna Marie Aagaard considered in detail the difficulties which existed in the structural relationship of Bossey with Unit I, and decided to recommend:

«that the Ecumenical Institute, Bossey, be removed from Unit I and placed within the General Secretariat under the direct supervision of the Deputy General Secretary (Programmes).

This conclusion was based on the understanding that Bossey is not a programme area (in which case it would be located within a unit) but an Ecumenical Institute in service to the Council as a whole (for which the General Secretariat is the more appropriate location). The group felt that the creation of a Board (which had been agreed by Central Committee but which had not yet met) was the most significant way of ensuring the well-being of the Ecumenical Institute and its effective working. Bossey would function very adequately by being accountable directly to the Deputy General Secretary – Programmes. The new Board would take the main responsibility for accompanying the staff and overseeing the work of the Institute.» (The text of the formal recommendation is identical with the recommendation of the Executive Committee quoted above.)

3. This recommendation was communicated by the General Secretary to the members of the Unit I Commission prior to its meeting in January 1995 with the request for advice and response. The Unit I Commission adopted the following resolution:

- a. «The Unit I Commission urges the Executive Committee to ensure the implementation of policy that translation for all the official languages of the WCC be provided at Bossey.

- b. «A memorandum from the General Secretary of the WCC invited the Unit I Commission to respond to the proposal that the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey be relocated and moved to the General Secretariat. The discussions in the Unit I Commission revealed a dissatisfaction about the process so far, including the short notice given to the Commission and the imbalance and lack of detail in the presentation with regard to the implications of the move both for Bossey and especially for Unit I.
- c. «We affirm the distinct nature of Bossey as an Ecumenical Institute serving the wider agenda of the whole WCC, as a living and learning community. We also recognize that particular administrative arrangements need to be made to provide for this unique situation, but we believe that this can be made within the context of Unit I. There is also provision in the by-laws for the existence and function of the Board of Bossey within the Unit. Moreover, Bossey makes a unique and valuable contribution to the overall life of the Unit, and is a significant part of the Unit's programme.
- d. «The Unit I Commission came to the conclusion that the time had not come for a new restructuring after only three years since the last restructuring. Any new structure needs time to get settled. The Commission also affirms the guiding principles set out by the Advisory Committee on the restructuring, that all programme activities should be located in the context of the work of a Programme Unit. To ensure accountability, all programmes are required to report to the Central Committee through the Unit Commissions.

«In light of these considerations, the Unit I Commission recommends that Bossey remain in Unit I.»

4. At its meeting in February 1995, the Executive Committee received the report from the Structure Review Group and the response from the Unit I Commission. It decided to defer action on the recommendation in order to provide opportunity for the Bossey Interim Board to consider the matter as well. At its meeting in April 1995, the Board expressed support for the recommendations made by the Structure Review Group in December 1994 and recommended «that they be adopted and implemented by the Executive Committee of the WCC in its meeting in September 1995» (voted with no dissenting votes and two abstentions).

The Board added the following rationale for this move in the relocation of Bossey:

- a. «The relocation of Bossey to the General Secretariat is seen as the most appropriate way of expressing that the Ecumenical Institute and its work is related to the various streams of programmatic work in all WCC units.

The relocation of Bossey to the General Secretariat does not mean a fundamental shift in its programme, rather it would express more properly the existing variety of themes and programmatic issues present in its courses and the Graduate Schools.

- b. «The relocation of Bossey to the General Secretariat is seen as a structural means to strengthen the accountability of Bossey as an inter-unit activity of the WCC as a whole, securing proper ways of supervision and lines of communication with all units while not diminishing any existing relations.
- c. «The relocation of Bossey to the General Secretariat would enable Bossey staff to concentrate its energies on activities and programmes specific to the Institute, while having the freedom to participate in meetings and events of other units as long as they are related to Bossey activities.
- d. «The relocation of Bossey to the General Secretariat would take into consideration that the style and rhythm of work at Bossey as a living and learning community as well as an academic institution, is different from work-style in the programme units of the WCC.»

The Bossey Interim Board added the following suggestions for implementing the move of Bossey from Unit I to the General Secretariat:

- a. «that a Staff Advisory Group for Bossey be reinstituted in order to accompany the teaching staff in its work and programmatic orientation and to provide for a regular exchange with representatives of different units of the WCC;
- b. «that the Director of Bossey become a member of the Staff Executive Group and participate in its meetings as far as possible;
- c. «that the members of the teaching staff of Bossey might work out special arrangements by which each member would have a particular relationship to one of the units of the WCC;
- d. «that the Board of Bossey be seen as the body carrying responsibility for the oversight of the quality of teaching and academic programme in conjunction with the Deputy General Secretary for Programmes.»

The Officers of Unit I were informed of this action by the General Secretary.

5. The Officers of the WCC, meeting in May 1995, reviewed the matter and decided to recommend to the Executive Committee at its September meeting that it adopt the recommendation of the Structure Review Group and forward

it to the Central Committee for final action. The Executive Committee accepted this recommendation by the Officers.

6. Accordingly, the Unit I Committee considered first the statement by the Unit I Commission (cf. point 3. above) and voted to approve it (16 in favour, 4 against, 2 abstentions). It then voted to «disapprove (by a vote of 17 in favour, 2 against, 5 abstentions) the recommendations concerning the relocation of the Ecumenical Institute Bossey and the proposed amendments to the rules, regulations and by-laws of the WCC...».

The Committee offered the following rationale for its actions:

- «a. The present WCC structure works as well as can be expected at this stage of its development.
- b. The claim that Bossey serves the whole WCC can be made for every stream in the WCC.
- c. Unit I and Bossey share the same goals and purposes – theology (Faith and Order), worship and spirituality, theological education and laity.
- d. It is important for Unit I and Bossey to hold together their particular aspects of theological work.
- e. As the Bossey Board works within Unit I, it can deal with the institutional needs of the Ecumenical Institute.»

7. The Committee on the General Secretariat recommended without dissent (1 abstention) that the respective recommendation be adopted and that Bossey be transferred to the General Secretariat.

8. After having been briefed by Officers of the Committees on Unit I and on the General Secretariat, the Executive Committee voted without dissent (4 abstentions) to reconfirm its earlier recommendation to the effect:

- a. that the Ecumenical Institute, Bossey, be moved from Unit I to come under the direct responsibility of the General Secretariat;*
- b. that the Director report to the Deputy General Secretary (Programmes);*
- c. that the Bossey Board report to the Central Committee through the Executive Committee and the General Secretariat Committee; and*
- d. that the rules, regulations and by-laws of the Council be amended accordingly (see Appendix IX to these minutes).*

Dr Nababan moved the adoption of these recommendations.

Dr Tveter recapitulated in detail the procedures that had taken place in an attempt to deal with what she felt should have been a relatively simple issue: should the Ecumenical Institute, Bossey, remain administratively and programmatically under Unit I, or go under the General Secretariat, so that it can serve the whole Council? But it had turned out to be a far from simple matter. She was critical of the way the issue had been dealt with and felt it strange that the paper containing the recommendations relative to Bossey had been discussed not only in the Unit I Committee which was currently the responsible body in relation to Bossey, but also in the General Secretariat Committee.

She saw three facets emerging: first, it was clear that there was a personality conflict, but personnel problems cannot be solved by changing the structure. Secondly, there was the structure question: if the General Secretariat began to get involved in programmes, this tendency may increase – especially since there was reference to increased programme activities under the Office of Inter-religious Relations. Thirdly, there was the issue of who should influence and guide the work of the Council: Central Committee is the governing body, responsible for ensuring accountability.

She felt that the issue was not only a matter of where Bossey should be located but one that touched the integrity of the Central Committee, and she urged members to vote against the recommendation.

Mr Allsop spoke in favour of the recommendation, but with some reluctance since he saw it as only a short term response to a larger problem. Although the new structure was deemed to be working well, it seemed that there were a number of issues that still had to be resolved. The role of the General Secretariat was not clear: is it a service, or is it also a provider of programmes? Who defines what is a programme and what is a service area? What are the various accountabilities and to whom does each report? How much independence will the Bossey Board have to determine the programme policy and way of operating? It was necessary that we become mutually accountable, and for this to happen we must work through the problems to avoid any debate of this nature in the future.

Prof. Aagaard asked that the minutes record the fact that she did not accept the implications of Dr Tveter's intervention – that the work leading up to the present recommendation lacked integrity. She moved that the vote on the recommendation be by written ballot. This was **agreed**.

The Central Committee **voted in favour** of the recommendation that the Ecumenical Institute, Bossey, be moved from Unit I to the General Secretariat by 68 votes, with 34 votes against and 5 abstentions.

III. Changes in the Rules

Dr Nababan, moderating the business session, affirmed that 24 hours' notice had been given with regard to a number of proposed changes in the Rules of the World Council of Churches.

The necessity to make changes in the Rules arose first in connection with the request by Central Committee in January 1994 for a review of the **working guide to the Rules of Debate**; it authorised the Executive to recommend such revision as it considered appropriate. It was found that only minor modifications were required to bring them into line with current practice.

Secondly, a sub-committee composed of members of the Executive and Central Committees was appointed by the Executive in September 1994 to look at the question of **criteria for membership**; part of its task was to review the existing Rules and propose new legislation as appropriate.

The last review of the criteria for WCC membership was done in 1977-1979; it was discontinued without any conclusion or decision. The Executive Committee has considered it desirable and timely to review again the Rules pertaining to membership and those concerning the relationships of the WCC with various partner ecumenical bodies, for the following reasons:

- the financial implications of membership;
- the unceasing flow of new applications for membership;
- new aspects in the relationships with non-member churches;
- new developments in the relationships with national and regional ecumenical bodies, Christian World Communions and other ecumenical organisations.

The sub-committee proposed a number of changes in Rules pertaining to financial obligations of membership, local ecumenical involvement of a church applying for membership, and its size; as well as some revisions concerning associate membership, associate councils, regional ecumenical organisations, Christian World Communions, and international Ecumenical Organisations. These were considered by the General Secretariat Committee. In the framework

of its report, Ms Gcabashe presented the following proposals (changes in *italics*) to Central Committee for action:

A. Rules of Debate: Rule XV.5(b)

b) Speaking

Any person desiring to speak shall do so only when granted the right by the Moderator. The speaker shall state his or her name and church and address his or her remarks to the Moderator. A delegate may speak only to propose or second a motion or amendment, to engage in the debate or to state a point of order or procedure. Any speaker shall normally give notice of his or her desire to speak to the Moderator, either prior to the session or by sending a note to the Moderator through one of the stewards and the Moderator shall have regard to such notice, but the Moderator remains free to grant the right to speak and determine the order of speakers under paragraph (a) of the Rule.

The Central Committee **agreed** to these amendments.

j) Privileged motions

- 1) To recess or to adjourn
- 2) That the question not be put
- 3) To postpone indefinitely

When a matter has been postponed indefinitely, it may not be taken up again at the entire meeting of the assembly, except with the consent of two-thirds of the delegates present and voting.

- 4) To postpone to a time specified
- 5) To refer to a committee

It was proposed that point 3) under Privileged Motions be deleted, since this eventuality is covered by an adjournment, postponement to a specific time, or reference to a committee. Points 4-5 to be re-numbered 3 and 4 respectively.

The Central Committee **agreed**.

B. Financial Obligations: New Rule I.6

(replacing Rule II.7 and last part of Rule II.1 – with the addition of this Rule the subsequent point under Rule I will be re-numbered)

I.6 Financial participation

- a) *Each member church shall make an annual contribution to the general budget of the Council. The amount of the contribution shall be agreed upon in consultation between the church and the Council and shall be regularly reviewed.*

- b) Each member church shall, in ways commensurate with its resources and in consultation with the Council, participate in assuming responsibility for the costs of the programmes of the WCC and for expenses related to travel and accommodation of its representatives to WCC events.*
- c) The implications of not fulfilling such obligations shall be such as the Central Committee shall decide.*

In response to a question, Dr Raiser explained that point (c) above was simply identifying the task that Central Committee might have to deal with; further clarification would be necessary once the rule was adopted.

Dr Koshy noted that these points were repeated in the section on Associate Membership, and proposed an amendment to avoid this repetition:

each member church and associate member church shall make an annual contribution..

Ms Gcabashe however felt the Committee would wish to keep the two separate. The amendment was put to the vote but was **lost**, with 36 in favour, 54 against and 8 abstentions.

The Central Committee **agreed** to this new rule I.6 as above.

C. Local ecumenical involvement

An addendum to Rule I.3.c) on criteria for membership in the Council was proposed as follows:

A church must recognize the essential inter-dependence of the churches, particularly those of the same confession, and must practise constructive ecumenical relations with other churches within its country or region. This will normally mean that the church is a member of the national council of churches or similar body, and of the regional ecumenical organization.

This was **agreed**.

D. Size

A new Rule I.4 replacing present Rule I.3.d) was proposed (with subsequent points being re-numbered):

- a) In addition to the criteria under Rule I.3 an applicant church must ordinarily have at least 25,000 members. The Central Committee may decide for*

exceptional reasons to admit into membership a church that does not fulfil the criterion of size.

- b) *Churches in the same country or region that do not fulfil the criterion of size may jointly apply for membership and are encouraged by the World Council to do so.*

Metropolitan Chrysostomos reiterated the opinion of many Orthodox that they were often in the minority within the Council and that the continuing acceptance of new Protestant churches did nothing to alleviate this feeling. He proposed an amendment that the minimum membership figure should be changed to 50,000. This was put to the vote but was **lost**.

Secondly, Metr. Chrysostomos proposed deleting the second sentence in (a) above. This was put to the vote but was **lost**. Dr Raiser pointed out that this sentence was an explanation of the existing situation; it did not imply any change in policy.

The Central Committee **voted in favour** of the new Rule I.4 a) and b) above.

E. Associate Membership

Ms Gcabashe explained that the General Secretariat Committee was recommending an entirely revised and more detailed rule with regard to associate membership (with the exception of point (b) below which already exists). This would provide a means to accommodate churches which would like some association with the Council but for various reasons did not wish to be in full membership. The proposed text was as follows:

- a) *A church otherwise eligible for membership, may be elected to associate membership in the same manner as member churches are elected:*
- 1) *if the applicant would be denied membership solely under rule I.3 (d).
A church applying for associate membership for this reason must ordinarily have at least 10,000 members;*
 - 2) *if the applicant, for reasons which must be approved by the Central Committee, expresses its desire to be in associate membership.*
- b) An associate member church may participate in all activities of the Council; its representatives to the Assembly shall have the right to speak but not to vote. Associate member churches shall be listed separately on the official list maintained by the General Secretary.

- c) *Each associate member church shall make an annual contribution to the general budget of the Council. The amount of the contribution shall be agreed upon in consultation between the church and the Council and shall be regularly reviewed.*
- d) *Each associate member church shall, in ways commensurate with its resources and in consultation with the Council, participate in assuming responsibility for the costs of the programmes of the WCC and for expenses related to travel and accommodation of its representatives to WCC events.*
- e) *The implications of not fulfilling such obligations shall be such as the Central Committee shall decide.*

This new text was **agreed**.

F. Associate Councils

It was proposed to add the following point to the existing Rule XI, as an additional point 4. This was **agreed**:

In consultation with the associate councils, the Central Committee shall establish and review from time to time guidelines regarding the relationships between the WCC and national councils of churches¹⁷.

G. Regional Ecumenical Organizations

It was proposed that the term *regional conferences (of churches)* be replaced by *regional ecumenical organizations* in order to be in line with current usage. An additional point 4. was proposed, which was **agreed** as follows:

The Central Committee, together with the regional ecumenical organizations, shall establish and review as appropriate guiding principles for relationships and cooperation between the World Council and regional ecumenical organizations¹⁸, including the means whereby programmatic responsibilities could be shared among them.

H. Christian World Communions

A new rule XIII. was proposed, to replace the brief reference to World Confessional Bodies. This was **agreed** as follows:

¹⁷ See Appendix VII to these minutes

¹⁸ See Minutes of Central Committee, September 1992, Appendix V.

1. *The World Council of Churches recognizes the role of Christian World Communions or world confessional bodies in the ecumenical movement.*
2. *Such Christian World Communions as may be designated by the Central Committee and which express their desire to this effect*
 - a) *shall be invited to send a delegated representative to the Assembly;*
 - b) *shall be invited to send an adviser to meetings of the Central Committee;*
 - c) *shall be provided with copies of all general communications sent to all member churches of the WCC.*
3. *The Central Committee shall establish and review as appropriate guidelines for relationships and cooperation with Christian World Communions.*

I. International Ecumenical Organizations

An entirely new rule XIV was proposed, (implying a re-numbering of all subsequent rules), and was **agreed** as follows:

1. *Ecumenical organizations other than those mentioned under Rules XI, XII and XIII may be recognized by the Central Committee as organizations with which the World Council has working relationships, provided:*
 - a) *The organization is international in nature (global, regional or sub-regional) and its objectives are consistent with the functions and purposes of the WCC;*
 - b) *The organization, knowing the Basis upon which the WCC is founded, expresses its desire to relate to and cooperate with the WCC.*
2. *On the basis of reciprocity, each international ecumenical organization:*
 - a) *shall be invited to send a delegated representative to the Assembly (cf. Rule III.1.b.5);*
 - b) *shall be provided with copies of general communications sent to all member churches of the WCC.*

It was noted that, these amendments having been approved, the Constitution and Rules together with the By-Laws approved by Central Committee at its meeting in January 1994, would be published as a reference booklet.

STAFFING REPORT

In a closed session, the Moderator invited Dr Nababan to present the Staffing report.

Dr Nababan reported that the Executive Committee, as the Staffing and Nominations Committee of Central Committee, recommended that the following senior staff appointments be approved:

1. Appointments

Unit II

- **Rev. Simon Oxley** (UK, Baptist Union of Great Britain), as Executive Secretary for Education for four years from an agreed date

General Secretariat – Eighth Assembly Office

- **Ms Pauline McKay** (Aotearoa/New Zealand, Methodist Church), as Executive Secretary for three years five months from 1 November 1995

The Central Committee **agreed**.

2. Contract Extensions

All contract extensions listed below are for three years unless otherwise stated. Dr Nababan moved that the following contract extensions be approved:

Unit I

- **Rev. Dr Thomas Best** (USA, Christian Church [Disciples of Christ]), Executive Secretary, from 1 January 1997 (will complete 16 years' service)
- **Dr John Pobee** (Ghana, Church of the Province of West Africa [Anglican]), Executive Secretary, from 1 February 1997 (will complete 16 years' service)

Unit II

- **Mr Costandi Mustaklem** (Jerusalem, Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem and All Palestine [Eastern]), Finance Officer, from 1 March 1997 (will complete 10 years' service)

- **Ms Margareta Skold** (Sweden, Church of Sweden), Executive Secretary, Health, for **one** year from 1 November 1996 (will complete 8 years' service)

Unit III

- **Mr Israel Batista-Guerra** (Cuba, Methodist Church in Cuba), Executive Secretary for Networks Coordination, from 1 February 1997 (will complete 13 years' service)
- **Mr Clement John** (Pakistan, Church of Pakistan), Executive Secretary, CCIA, from 1 February 1997 (will complete 7 years' service)
- **Dr Deborah Robinson** (USA, Progressive National Baptist Convention Inc.), Executive Secretary, Racial Justice Issues, from 1 January 1997 (will complete 7 years' service)

Unit IV

- **Ms Joan Geuss** (USA, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America), Finance Officer, from 1 January 1997 (will complete 7 years' service)
- **Rev. Richard Murigande** (Burundi, Methodist Church in Burundi), Executive Secretary for Africa, from 1 January 1997 (will complete 13 years' service)
- **Ms Marta Palma** (Chile, Pentecostal Mission Church), Executive Secretary for Latin America and Caribbean, from 1 October 1996 (will complete 13 years' service)

GENERAL SECRETARIAT

Office of Church and Ecumenical Relations

- **Mr Georges Lemopoulos** (Turkey/Switzerland, Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople [Eastern]), Executive Secretary, from 1 February 1997 (will complete 13 years' service)
- **Mr Huibert van Beek** (Netherlands, Swiss Protestant Church Federation), Executive Secretary, from 1 October 1996 (will complete 21 years 1 month's service)

Communication Department

- **Mr Marlin VanElderen** (USA, Christian Reformed Church in North America) Executive Editor, from 1 October 1996 (will complete 17 years' service)

Personnel Office

- **Ms Angelica Espinoza** (Chile, Roman Catholic), Associate Director, from 1 January 1997 (will complete 21 years 9 months' service)

Dr Larsson noted that a number of staff were remaining for longer periods, and asked whether the former 10-year rule had been completely dropped. The

General Secretary responded that this rule had indeed been dropped. But in the case of each proposal for a contract extension, careful consideration was given as to whether it was in the best interests of the WCC and of the staff member to have a contract extended or whether it would be more appropriate to terminate a contract. It was not assumed that programme staff would remain until retirement, and a last extension provided opportunity for a staff member to prepare for reintegration into professional life in his or her home country.

Dr Granberg-Michaelson felt that, by extending some of these contracts with specific programmatic areas of responsibility already beyond the Eighth Assembly, it might be assumed that these programme areas would continue as they are now, perhaps precluding the necessary flexibility for prioritising programmes. He suggested that there be a period after the assembly when the new Central Committee might consider new directions, priorities and styles of work, as well as the location where the work is done; it would be helpful if there were some understanding that staff assignments were open to reconsideration after 1998. Secondly, bearing in mind the financial considerations, it was unlikely that any new staff positions would be added, but if all remained as they were, the possibility of changing priorities would be limited.

He proposed that the contract extensions under consideration be approved with the clear understanding that programme responsibilities proposed would be subject to future adjustment and change as may be determined by the General Secretary in consultation with the Executive Committee. Any future extensions should be carefully reviewed in order to preserve the future flexibility of programme, style and direction of the WCC's activity following the Assembly. Finally, he urged the Executive to give serious consideration to the matter of overall future staffing commitments in light of potential future changes in priorities and styles of work, implications of the CUV process, and budget constraints.

The Moderator suggested that the Executive Committee take up this matter in detail at a future meeting. Dr Nababan pointed out that the present recommendations extended 1-2 years beyond the Assembly; the new Central Committee would need some time in which to set priorities.

The Central Committee **agreed** to the above contract extensions.

3. Vacancies

Unit III

- Executive Secretary, Director of the UN Headquarters Liaison Office
- Executive Secretary, Youth

Unit IV

- Executive Secretary, Africa Desk

General Secretariat – OICD

- Associate Director

Ms Ganaba referred to earlier references made in Central Committee about balances on the staff, and the principle was adopted with regard to vacancies that preference would be given to Orthodox and women. How far had this principle been implemented? She was aware that some Orthodox women had applied for positions but none were proposed for appointment.

The General Secretary pointed to the statistics provided by the Personnel Office which showed that the total number of women among the executive staff of the Council had increased and was currently more than 40%. He assured her of his commitment to further increasing the number of women, as well as of Orthodox staff, and he had made every effort to seek Orthodox candidates for staff positions. He would welcome any suggestions of persons who would meet the requirements of the positions concerned.

Dr Walker-Smith asked how vacancies were advertised, and to what constituencies? Did member churches have a role in the process of proposing candidates?

The General Secretary reminded members that there had been a careful process of decision-making which began prior to Canberra, and in 1992 this Central Committee had approved Staffing Procedures (CC minutes, September 1992, Appendix IV). These spell out the different stages laid down for the process, beginning with advertising a list of vacancies, normally sent out with his letter to member churches and other ecumenical organisations following a meeting of the Central Committee. But it was for the churches to decide whether the information should be made more widely available within its constituency. The WCC does not advertise commercially.

Prof. Aagaard asked whether consideration could be given as to whether it was necessary in the future for Central Committee to retain responsibility for

appointing staff to positions under the unit executive directors. It was her understanding that only the appointments of deputy general secretaries and executive directors should come to the governing body; all other appointments were the responsibility of the General Secretary.

Ms Ruth Abraham referred to the General Secretary's Report and his point about how in future the Council should address issues of recruitment, and whether some staff might be based elsewhere than Geneva. Could some thought be given to this? Responding, Dr Raiser said the Council had not yet reached a policy of regionalisation, but in some cases it had been possible to use staff resources available in a member church on the basis of a contractual arrangement – as was the case with the climate change programme. A similar model could be explored for the future.

Ms Tungane Williams noted that there was only one staff member from the Pacific and urged that serious consideration be given to applicants from that region. Dr Raiser pointed out that he would welcome applications from the Pacific, but he was aware that qualified people were badly needed in their home churches and it was not easy to persuade churches to release people for service with the WCC.

Metr. Chrysostomos believed that to keep staff on for a longer period would ensure some continuity; for this reason he proposed that contracts be made in the first place for a ten or even twelve year period. This would help to attract people from the academic field who would not consider leaving their academic posts for a shorter period. It would also give a new impetus to the ecumenical movement.

Dr Raiser agreed that it was becoming increasingly difficult to persuade people to move to Geneva because they risk losing their position in their professional careers, and without special arrangements for a leave of absence, they face difficulties in reintegrating after a period of service elsewhere. But he did not see that this problem could be resolved by offering 10-year contracts. In the end, people had to accept the risk entailed in serving with the WCC, as they do with other international bodies, and we must help them cope with that risk.

Dr Garrett asked who determined when a particular programme should be concluded: surely this would influence the staffing within a particular unit? Dr Raiser said that decisions of this kind would be prepared by staff and presented to the respective Unit Commission, and then to the Unit Committee. No programme was expected to continue without some limit.

In response to a question about the appointment of staff from non-member churches, Dr Raiser said it had been the policy to establish direct links with churches which are not in membership but where a line of mutual sharing could be helpful. Such appointments would not include senior executive positions.

With regard to staff members from the Roman Catholic Church, two had been appointed officially as a consequence of agreements with our RC partners. In addition, a considerable number of administrative/secretarial staff recruited from within Switzerland were Roman Catholic, since the authorities only allow the WCC to engage staff from outside the country in exceptional circumstances.

The Moderator expressed appreciation for this discussion which had helped to elucidate some of the questions in the minds of members of Central Committee.

The Central Committee **agreed** to authorise the Executive Committee to fill any vacancies that should be filled prior to the next CC meeting.

(Further information on staff matters can be found in Executive Committee minutes of September 1994, February 1995 and September 1995)

The Staffing report was **received** with appreciation.

DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Dates for future meetings had been scheduled as follows:

1996:	5-9 March	Executive Committee	Honiara, Solomon Islands
	10-11 September	Executive Committee	Geneva
	12-20 September	Central Committee	Geneva
	(arrival 11th, departure 21st September)		
1997:	12-15 February	Executive Committee	Cyprus
	9-10 September	Executive Committee	Geneva
	11-19 September	Central Committee	Geneva
	(arrival 10th, departure 20th September)		

CLOSING ACTIONS

On behalf of the Officers, the Moderator expressed thanks and appreciation to members of the Central Committee and all who had attended the meeting in various capacities for their active participation in the deliberations and actions of the Committee. He also thanked the moderators of the deliberative sessions, and the moderators and vice-moderators of the General Secretariat Committee and Unit Committees, as well as all who served on other committees and groups. He also expressed gratitude to the General Secretary, his Deputies, the Assistant General Secretary, and the Assistant to the General Secretary.

The General Secretary thanked all those who had contributed to ensuring the success of the meeting, including:

- Mary Ann Lundy, Terry MacArthur, Luzmarina Campos Garcia, and Laurent Raposo for planning the worship,
- Nan Braunschweiger, Conference Secretary,
- Renate Sbeghen for organising the parish visits on 17 September,
- the team of Stewards, under the staff leadership of Anu Talvivaara,
- the team of Interpreters and Translators, coordinated by Joan Reilly and Ada Silenzi,
- Andrée and Lino d'Alessandri and Robert Equey for the interpretation equipment,
- Joan Cambitsis and Christina Murillo-Bianchi, responsible for the Documents Office,
- the printshop staff coordinated by Daniel Moreillon,
- the Typing Pool coordinated by Judith Kocher and Janet Thomas,
- Administrative staff in the General Secretariat: Brigitte Constant, Gudrun Smith and Ursula Zierl,
- Rosemary Green, minute writer, assisted by Rebecca Metaxa, Yvette Milosevic, and Mercedes Restrepo-Herzig,
- Claire Tierney and the team who staffed the registration and information desks,
- Libby Visinand, editor of *Day by Day*,
- staff of the telephone/telex/telefax office under the leadership of Marie-Christine Gendre,

- Yasmina Lebouachera and the cash office staff,
- Heather Stunt and the staff of the WCC Bookshop,
- Peter Williams, photographer, and Gaby Vuagniaux, responsible for photo distribution,
- Bob Scott, plenary hall manager,
- Gilbert Cudré-Mauroux for recordings,
- Margot Wahl and Jukka Pitulainaan – local transportation,
- Peter Tallon, John McVie and Michel Monjol for coordination with the cafeteria,
- M. Eberl and his kitchen staff,
- technical staff coordinated by José Mendez,
- the Raptim staff for travel arrangements.

The Moderator adjourned the forty-sixth meeting of the Central Committee at 16.00 on Friday 22 September 1995, and wished all participants a safe journey home.

* * *

The **Closing Worship** took place in the Ecumenical Centre Chapel; the preacher was Bishop Amos Omodunbi.

APPENDIX I

PARTICIPANTS

PRESIDIUM

Presidents

Prof. Anna Marie Aagaard, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark

Bishop Vinton Anderson, African Methodist Episcopal Church, USA

Mrs Priyanka Mendis, Church of Ceylon, Sri Lanka

His Beatitude Parthenios, Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Alexandria, Egypt

Rev. Eunice Santana, Disciples of Christ, Puerto Rico

Dr Aaron Tolen, Presbyterian Church of Cameroon

OFFICERS OF CENTRAL COMMITTEE

Moderator

His Holiness Aram I, Catholicos of Cilicia, Armenian Apostolic Church
(Cilicia), Lebanon

Vice-Moderators

Ephorus Dr Soritua A. E. Nababan, Batak Protestant Christian Church,
Indonesia

Pastora Nélide Ritchie, Evangelical Methodist Church of Argentina

General Secretary

Rev. Dr Konrad Raiser, EKD - Evangelical Church in Germany

MEMBERS OF CENTRAL COMMITTEE

Mrs Ruth Abraham, Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus

Ms Ahn Ju Hye, Korean Methodist Church

Mr Charles Ajalat, Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch, USA

Rev. Levi Okang'a Akhura, African Church of the Holy Spirit, Kenya
 Rev. Ian Allsop, Churches of Christ in Australia
 Bishop Ambrosius of Joensuu, Orthodox Church of Finland
 Rev. Andreas Anggui, Toraja Church, Indonesia
 Metropolitan Athanasios (Papas) of Heliopolis and Theira, Ecumenical
 Patriarchate of Constantinople
 Bishop Paulo Ayres Mattos, Methodist Church in Brazil
 Mrs Khushnud Azariah, Church of Pakistan
 Barbara Bazett, Canadian Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends
 Pasteur Martin Beukenhorst, United Protestant Church of Belgium
 Prof. Dr André Birmelé, Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession of
 Alsace and Lorraine, France
 Rev. Dr Karel Blei, Netherlands Reformed Church
 Sra Cristina Bösenberg, Evangelical Church of the River Plate, Argentina
 Archbishop Nerses Bozabalian, Armenian Apostolic Church (Etchmiadzin)
 Rev. Violet Sampa Bredt, United Church of Zambia
 Mr John Briggs, Baptist Union of Great Britain
 Rt Rev. Björn Bue, Church of Norway
 Mrs Gladys Chiwanga, Church of the Province of Tanzania
 Metropolitan Chrysanthos of Limassol, Church of Cyprus
 Metropolitan Chrysostomos of Peristerion, Church of Greece
 Rev. Prof. Evanilza de Barros Correia, Episcopal Church of Brazil
 Rev. Dr Paul A. Crow, Jr., Disciples of Christ, USA
 Bishop Dr Kálmán Csiha, Reformed Church of Romania
 Mrs Rosemary Davies-Izard, Methodist Church, UK
 Frau Edeltraud Engel, EKD - Evangelical Church in Germany
 Bishop Dr Klaus Engelhardt, EKD - Evangelical Church in Germany
 Pastor Erasmo Farfan Figueroa, Pentecostal Mission Church, Chile
 Rev. Wali Fejo, Uniting Church of Australia
 Rev. Julio Francisco, Evangelical Congregational Church in Angola
 Mrs Olga Ganaba, Russian Orthodox Church
 Dr Maxine Garrett, Moravian Church (Northern Province), USA
 Mrs Virginia Gcabashe, Methodist Church of Southern Africa
 Prof. Dr Milan Gerka, Orthodox Church of Slovakia, Slovak Republic
 Bishop Hans Gerny, Old Catholic Church of Switzerland
 Ms Silva Ghazelyan, Armenian Apostolic Church (Etchmiadzin)
 Rt Rev. Dr John Ghose, Church of North India
 Rt Rev. Drexel Gomez, Church of the Province of the West Indies
 (Anglican), Bahamas
 Rev. Wesley Granberg-Michaelson, Reformed Church in America

Mrs Makiko Hirata, United Church of Christ in Japan
Mr Béalo Houmbouy, Evangelical Church in New Caledonia and the Loyalty Islands
Metropolitan Mar Gregorios Yohanna Ibrahim, Syrian Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch
Mrs Maryon Jägers, Church of England, (Netherlands)
Mrs Rosangela Jarjour, National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon
Dr Mac Charles Jones, National Baptist Convention of America, USA
Rt Rev. Jonas Jonson, Church of Sweden
Rev. Dr Margot Kässmann, EKD - Evangelical Church in Germany
Mrs Nagula Kathindi, Church of the Province of Southern Africa (Anglican)
Citoyen Tusange Katonia, Church of Christ in Zaire - Episcopal Baptist Community
Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk, Russian Orthodox Church
Mr Dimitre Kirov, Bulgarian Orthodox Church
Very Rev. Leonid Kishkovsky, Orthodox Church in America
Ms Wsiewolod Konach, Autocephalic Orthodox Church in Poland
Prof. George Koshy, Church of South India
Dr Günter Krusche, EKD - Evangelical Church in Germany
Dr Birgitta Larsson, Church of Sweden
Bishop Lavrentije of Sabac-Valjevo, Serbian Orthodox Church
Dr Peter Lodberg, Evangelical Lutheran Church of Denmark
Dr Janice Love, United Methodist Church, USA
Mrs Jan Malpas, Anglican Church of Australia
Rev. Dr David Mandeng Ma Mbeleg, Presbyterian Church of Cameroon
Mrs Nadeje Mandysova, Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren, Czech Rep.
Miss Maryssa Mapanao-Camaddo, United Church of Christ in the Philippines
Rev. Hector Mendez, Presbyterian Reformed Church in Cuba
Rev. Dr Donald Miller, Church of the Brethren, USA
Rev. Dr A. Matitsoane Moseme, Lesotho Evangelical Church
Dr med. Irmela Müller-Stöver, EKD - Evangelical Church in Germany
Rt Rev. John Mungania, Methodist Church in Kenya
Mrs Faith Mwondha, Church of Uganda
Rt Rev. John Neill, Church of Ireland
Ms Margarita Neliubova, Russian Orthodox Church
Bishop Nifon of Slobozia & Calarasi, Romanian Orthodox Church
Mrs Prakai Nontawasee, Church of Christ in Thailand
Rt Rev. Dr Henry Okullu, Church of the Province of Kenya (Anglican)
Bishop Amos Omodunbi, Methodist Church, Nigeria

Very Rev. Prof. Joseph Omoyajowo, Church of the Province of Nigeria

Rev. Dr Ruth Page, Church of Scotland

Rev. Valamotu Palu, Methodist Church in Tonga

Dr Park Jong-Wha, Presbyterian Church in the Rep. of Korea

Most Rev. Tito Pasco, Philippine Independent Church

Prof. Dr Constantine Patelos, Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Alexandria,
Greece

Rev. Rachel Paulin, Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa/New Zealand

Archpriest Viktor Petliuchenko, Russian Orthodox Church

Dr Elsie Philip, Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church, India

Ms V. R. Vidhya Rani, United Evangelical Lutheran Churches in India

Mrs Birgitta Rantakari, Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland

Landesbischof Eberhardt Renz, EKD - Evangelical Church in Germany

Rt Rev. Barry Rogerson, Church of England, UK

Prof. John Romanides, Church of Greece

Dr Heinz Rüegger, Swiss Protestant Church Federation

Rev. Dr William Rusch, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Pastor José da Silveira Salvador, Evangelical Presbyterian Church of
Portugal

Mrs Patricia Scoutas, Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, Australia

Dr Nenevi Seddoh, Evangelical Church of Togo

Rev. Dr Paul Sherry, United Church of Christ, USA

Mrs Sri Winarti Soedjatmoko, East Java Christian Church, Indonesia

Mr Harrys Sumbayak, Simalungun Protestant Christian Church, Indonesia

Dr Bert Supit, Christian Evangelical Church in Minahasa, Indonesia

Rev. Marianna Szabo-Matrai, Lutheran Church in Hungary,

Bishop Jan Szarek, Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in
Poland

Bishop Melvin Talbert, United Methodist Church, USA

Ms Kristine Thompson, Presbyterian Church (USA)

Archbishop Timotheos, Ethiopian Orthodox Church

Very Rev. Dr Georges Tsetsis, Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople,
Switzerland

Rev. Dr Eugene Turner, Presbyterian Church (USA)

Dr Anne Tveter, Church of Norway

Rev. Nove Vailaau, Congregational Christian Church of Samoa

Rev. Angelique Walker-Smith, National Baptist Convention USA, Inc.

Rev. Dr Daniel Weiss, American Baptist Churches, USA

Rev. Elizabeth Welch, United Reformed Church in the UK

Rev. Martin Wessels, Moravian Church in Southern Africa

Mrs Tungane Williams, Cook Islands Christian Church
 Ato Gezahegne Yaynesate G.Selassie, Ethiopian Orthodox Tawedo Church
 Rt Rev. Dr Zacharias Mar Theophilos, Mar Thoma Syrian Church of
 Malabar, India
 Rev. Maran Zau Yaw, Myanmar Baptist Convention (Burma)
 Archmandrite Nestor Zhiliaev, Russian Orthodox Church
 Pasteur Amos Zita, Presbyterian Church of Mozambique

SUBSTITUTES

Bishop Feofan of Berlin and All Germany Russian Orthodox Church	for Dr Alexei Buevsky <i>15-20 September</i>
Dr Pamela Chinnis Episcopal Church, USA	for the Most Rev. E. Browning, <i>14-19 September</i>
Mr Geoffroy de Turckheim Augsburg Confession Alsace & Lorraine	for Prof. Dr André Birmelé <i>14-17 September</i>
Rt Rev. Terry Finlay Anglican Church of Canada	for the Most Rev. Michael Peers
Rev. Drs J.H. Huttenga Reformed Churches in the Netherlands	for Drs Aukje Westra
Ms Kelly Koh United Methodist Church, USA	for Dr Janice Love <i>18-22 September</i>
Dr Albert Laham Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch	for Metr. Elias Audi
Dr Mahfouz Adeeb Mitry Coptic Orthodox Church	for Bishop Serapion
Rev. Mangedwa Nyathi Progressive National Baptist Convention, Inc., USA	for Dr Charles Adams
Rev. Joan Parrott American Baptist Churches, USA	for Rev. Dr Daniel Weiss <i>14-19 September</i>

for Dr Hesina Tetelepta

for Most Rev. E. Browning
20-22 September

for Rev. J-B. Rakotomaro

for Frau Christine Oettel

for Mrs Kathryn Bannister

for Mrs Marion Best

Rev. Anna Ljung	Mission Covenant Church of Sweden
Very Rev. Honore Dika	Native Baptist Church of Cameroon
Rev. Trevor Edwards	Jamaica Baptist Union
Rev. Arlindo Marcal	Christian Church of East Timor
Mr Jastiel Mosha	Kenya Evangelical Lutheran Church
Rev. Malungo Pedro	Evangelical Reformed Church in Angola
Most Rev. Maurice Sinclair	Church of the Province of the Southern Cone
Rev. Dr O.E.C. Wuwungan	Protestant Church in W.Indonesia

Msr John A. Radano Roman Catholic Church
(Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity)

Msgr John Mutiso Mbinda Roman Catholic Church
(Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity)

GUEST

Rev. Dr Emilio Castro	Evangelical Methodist Church, Uruguay
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ADVISERS FROM WORLD ORGANISATIONS
AND OTHER BODIES

Rev. Dr Donald Anderson	Anglican Consultative Council
Dr Bert Beach	Seventh-Day Adventist General Conference
Deaconess Chita Framo	Diakonia
Mr John Graz	Seventh-Day Adventist General Conference
Dr Joe Hale	World Methodist Council
Mr Rosario Leon	World YWCA
Lieut.Colonel John Major	Salvation Army
Rev. John C. Moyer	Frontier Internship in Mission
Dr Ishmael Noko	Lutheran World Federation
Rev. Dr Milan Opocensky	World Alliance of Reformed Churches
Rev. Dr Cecil M. Robeck	Pentecostal Churches
Dr Philip Stine	United Bible Societies
Dr Dorothea Woods	Friends World Committee for Consultation
Mr Ralph Young	World Methodist Council

ADVISERS FROM NATIONAL CHRISTIAN COUNCILS
AND REGIONAL CONFERENCES

Rev. Toshitsugu Arai	Christian Conference of Asia
Rev. David Asante Dartey	Christian Council of Ghana
Drs Harmina Bakker	Council of Churches in the Netherlands
Rev. Dr Zoltan Bona	Ecumenical Council of Churches in Hungary
Mrs Gunnel Borgegaard	Nordic Ecumenical Council
Rev. Dr Joan B. Campbell	National Council of the Churches of Christ (NCCCUSA)
Rev. José Bela Chipenda	All Africa Conference of Churches
Rev. Augusto Chipesse	Council of Christian Churches in Angola
Rev. Maxwell Craig	Action of Churches Together in Scotland
Rev. Noel Davies	CYTUN: Churches Together in Wales
Rev. Douglas Du Charme	Canadian Council of Churches
Mr Jan Edstroem	Finnish Ecumenical Council

Mr Jean Fischer	Conference of European Churches
Rev. David Gill	National Council of Churches in Australia
Rev. Dr Riad Jarjour	Middle East Council of Churches
Rev. Dr Ipe Joseph	National Council of Churches in India
Rev. Murombedzi Kuchera	Zimbabwe Council of Churches
Pastor Holger Lam	Ecumenical Council of Denmark
Rev. Martin Lange	Council of Christian Churches in Germany
Mr Kjell Ove Nilsson	Christian Council of Sweden
Rev. Dr Joseph Pattiasina	Communion of Churches in Indonesia (PGI)
Mr Peter Pavlovic	Ecumenical Council of Churches
Rev. Dr Rienzie Perera	National Christian Council of Sri Lanka
Rev. John Reardon	Council of Churches for Britain and Ireland
Rev. Paul Sayah	Middle East Council of Churches
Ms Eunice Sowazi	Council of Swaziland Churches
Fr Michael Sparatelu	AidRom, Romania
Rev. Enock Tombe Stephen	Sudan Council of Churches
Rev. Thord-Ove Thordson	Christian Council of Sweden
Rev. Ed van Straten	Council of Churches in the Netherlands

UNIT ADVISERS

Very Rev. N. Apostola – Unit I	Dr Sigrun Mogedal – Unit II
Ms Giselle Berger Griot – Youth	Ms Aline Papazian – Unit IV
Prof. Ion Bria – Unit I	Ms Daniela Rei – Youth
Rev. Dr Frank Chikane – Unit III	Dr Friedhelm Solms – Unit III
Dr Rubem César Fernandes – Unit III	Prof. Dr Adebisi Sowunmi – Unit III
Dr Elizabeth Ferris – Unit IV	Dr Mary Tanner – Unit I
Dr David Hallman – Unit III	Dr M. M. Thomas – Unit III
Bishop Tilewa Johnson – Unit IV	Mr G. van Maanen – Unit III
Ms Kelly Koh – Youth	Rev. Dr Robert Welsh – Unit I
Rev. Godson Lawson – Youth	Mr Kenneth Whyte – Youth
Ms Jyotsna Massey – Youth	

OBSERVERS

Rev. Dr Johan Dalman	Church of Sweden
Mr Jan Henningson	Church of Sweden
Rev. Ane Hjerrild	Church of Denmark

Rev. David Perry
 Dr Hauun Runn
 Very Rev. Chahan Sarkissian
 Ms Rosemary Siyachitema
 Rt Rev. Jonathan Siyachitema
 Mr Stig Utnem
 Mr Tonny Waworuntu
 Rev. John Williams

Episcopal Church, USA
 New Sudan Council of Churches
 Armenian Apostolic Church (Cilicia)
 Zimbabwe Council of Churches
 Zimbabwe Council of Churches
 Church of Norway
 Protestant Church in W.Indonesia
 Presbyterian Church USA

COOPTED STAFF

Mrs Andrée d'Alessandri
 Mr Lino d'Alessandri
 Mr Gonzalo Arias
 Mrs Hilde Benz-Werner
 Mr Marino Biarge
 Rev. Heinz Birchmeier
 Dr Alain Blancy
 Ms Isabelle Bruchez
 Ms Natalia Chernych
 Rev. Tony Coates
 Ms Martine Cullot
 Mr Robert Equey
 Mr Robert Faerber
 Ms Tomoko Faerber-Evdokimoff
 Ms Emmy Flegenheimer
 Ms Roswitha Ginglas-Poulet
 Ms Nelly Lasserre

Ms Silvia Lee-Rieben
 Mr Gerhard Lenz
 Ms Françoise Nagy
 Ms Zinaida Nossova
 Ms Tatiana Orlova
 Ms Margaret Pater
 Mrs Olga Piskounova
 Dr Elisabeth Raiser
 Ms Lilliana Ramirez-Pfeiffer
 Ms Regina Reuschle
 Ms Madeleine Richter
 Ms Renate Strecker
 Ms Evelyne Tatu
 Ms Ludmila Tkatchouk
 Mr Geoffrey de Turckheim
 Ms Laurence Viguié
 Dr Marguerite Wieser

STAFF

Ms Catherine Alt
 Mrs Carole Anderson
 Rev. Dr Wesley Ariarajah
 Ms Salome Barth-Dadie
 Ms Jeanne Becher
 Mr Pierre Beffa

Rev. Myra Blyth
 Ms Nan Braunschweiger
 Mr Stephen Brown
 Ms Patricia Brüscheiler
 Ms Joan Cambitsis
 Ms Veena Chevret

Ms Danielle Chaperon
Ms Brigitte Constant
Ms Maryse Courvoisier
Mr Gilbert Cudré-Mauroux
Rev. Michael Davies
Ms Ursula Davoudi
Ms Désirée de Rycke
Mrs Violaine de Santa Ana
Ms Gabrielle de Sola
Ms Rosemarie Dönch
Mr Edmund Doogue
Rev. John Doom
Mr Richard Dunkley
Rev. Dwain Epps
Ms Salpy Eskidjian
Ms Françoise Faure
Rev. Dr Thomas FitzGerald
Ms Linda Ford
Ms Christine Gendre
Ms Maria Rosa Giovannini
Ms Aruna Gnanadason
Ms Wendy Goldsworthy
Ms Elisabeth Gouel
Ms Rosemary Green
Ms Monika Grob
Ms Lore Hyatt
Ms Catherine Inoubli
Mr Samuel Isaac
Ms Eldri Jauch
Mr Philip Jenks
Mr Clement John
Ms Stella Jungo
Ms Cornelia Kerkhoff
Mr Melaku Kifle
Rev. Samuel Kobia
Ms Judith Kocher
Mr Jan Kok
Ms Livia Konta de Palma
Rev. Ana Langerak
Ms Yasmina Lebouachera

Mr Yorgo Lemopoulos
Ms Mary Ann Lundy
Rev. Terry MacArthur
Ms Lise Marquot
Ms Caroline McComish
Mr John McVie
Mr José Mendez
Ms Sheila Mesa
Ms Rebecca Metaxa
Ms Yvette Milosevic
Dr Tarek Mitri
Mr Michel Monjol
Mr Daniel Moreillon
Ms Helene Moussa
Ms Cristina Murillo-Bianchi
Ms Ranyana Nath
Ms Catherine Nerfin
Rev. John Newbury
Ms Malle Niilus
Rev. Ofelia Ortega-Montoya
Mr François Pernet
Rev. Hugh Pettingell
Rev. Garland Pierce
Rev. Eugenio Poma
Ms Alexandra Pomezny
Mr David Pozzi-Johnson
Mr Günter Rath
Ms Emilia Reichmuth
Ms Joan Reilly
Ms Mercedes Restrepo-Herzig
Dr Deborah Robinson
Ms Helga Rollman
Mr Gert Rüppell
Ms Renate Sbeghen
Ms Marilia Schüller
Rev. Robert Scott
Ms Ada Silenzi
Rev. Carlos Sintado
Ms Gudrun Smith
Ms Aurita Staudenmann

Ms Jean Stromberg
Ms Heather Stunt
Mr Peter Tallon
Ms Anu Talvivaara
Mr Patrick Taran
Ms Janet Thomas
Ms Claire Tierney
Ms Pilar Tosat-Delaraye
Mr Hans Ucko

Mr Huibert van Beek
Mr Marlin VanElderen
Ms Elisabeth Visinand
Ms Denise von Arx
Ms Gabrielle Vuagniaux
Ms Margot Wahl
Mr Peter Williams
Ms Ursula Zierl

STEWARDS

Ms Elizabeth Akello
Ms Daisy Alexander
Ms Edilceia D de Amaral
Mr Narcis C. Axinthe
Mr Mazen Bahady
Ms Beatriz Casas Fernandez
Ms En-Hui Chiu
Mr Wutipong Choksuphachinda
Mr Benjamin Cortes Morales
Mr Jeremy Crawford
Ms Rebecca W. Dine
Ms Huijuan Fu
Ms Meredith Harrison
Ms Shivaun Heath
Ms Jessie Joseph
Ms Shamaila Kanwal
Ms Madeleine Kattan
Mr Alexander L. Kern

Ms Jeannette Lawson
Mr Andrew J. Livingstone
Mr Veneo Magari
Mr Makalo N. Marite
Ms Nina Martiskainen
Ms Meseret Matewos Sugebo
Mr Nandraj Mootoosamy
Mr Corey Andrew Nelson
Mr Diego D. Orellana
Ms Marielle Reiss
Ms Erin C. Rutherford
Ms Anika M. Scheinemann
Ms Roberta Storvik
Mr Hagan Thompson
Ms Emerald Urbien
Mr Martin Hugo Videla
Ms Natalie Williams

APPENDIX II

MEMBERSHIP OF UNIT COMMITTEES, COMMITTEE ON THE GENERAL SECRETARIAT COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ISSUES AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

(* not present at this meeting)

Committee on the General Secretariat

Ms Virginia Gcabashe – Moderator

Mr John Briggs – Vice-Moderator

Mr Charles Ajalat

Rev. Ian Allsop

Mrs Khushnud Azariah

Barbara Bazett

* Most Rev. Edmond Browning

* Dr Alexei Buevsky

Rev. Dr Wesley Granberg-Michaelson

Mrs Maryon Jägers

Mrs Nagula Kathindi

Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk

Dr Günter Krusche

Rev. Héctor Méndez

Mrs Faith Mwondha

Bishop Nifon of Slobozia & Calarasi

Rt Rev. Dr Henry Okullu

His Beatitude Patriarch Parthenios

Most Rev. Tito Pasco

Dr Constantin Patelos

* Most Rev. Michael Peers

Ms Vidhya Rani

Bishop Jan Szarek

Bishop Melvin Talbert

* Dr Hesina Tetelepta

Dr Aaron Tolen

Rev.Dr Eugene Turner

* Dr Daniel Weiss

Mrs Tungane Williams

Ato Gezahegne Yayneshate

Substitutes:

Dr Pamela Chinnis (for Bishop Browning)

Rev. Dr Terry Finlay (for Archbishop Peers)

Rev. Joan Parrott (for Dr Weiss)

Rev. Caroline Pattiasina (for Dr Tetelepta)

Committee on Programme Unit I

* Metr. Daniel of Moldavia and Bukovina – Moderator

Dr Nenevi Seddoh – Acting Moderator

Rev. Dr Paul A. Crow, Jr. – Acting Vice-Moderator

Dr Anna Marie Aagaard

* Dr Charles Adams

Metr. Athanasios of Heliopolis

* Metropolitan Elias Audi

Prof. Dr André Birmelé

Rev. Dr Karel Blei

Archbishop Nerses Bozabalian

Mrs Gladys Chiwanga

Bishop Hans Gerny

Rt Rev. Jonas Jonson

Very Rev. Leonid Kishkovsky

Rév. Dr David Mandeng

Mrs Nadeje Mandysova

Rev. John Mungania

Rt Rev. John Neill

Mrs Prakai Nontawasee

Bishop Amos Omodunbi

* Mrs Violet Rhaburn

Rt Rev. Barry Rogerson

Prof. John Romanides

Rev. Dr William Rusch

Mrs Sri Winarti Soedjatmoko

Archbishop Timotheos

Ms Anne Tveter

* Rev. Dr Janos Viczian

Rev. Elizabeth Welch

Dr Zacharias Mar Theophilos

Archimandrite Nestor Zhiliaev

Substitutes:

Dr Albert Laham (for Metr.-Audi)

Rev. Mangedwa Nyathi (for Dr Adams)

Unit Advisers:

Very Rev. Nicholas Apostola

Prof. Ion Bria

Dr Mary Tanner

Rev. Robert Welsh

Committee on Programme Unit II

* Ms Marion Best – Moderator

Bishop Ambrosius of Joensuu – Acting Moderator

Rev. Dr Ruth Page – Acting Vice-Moderator

* Metr. Abraham of Nikortsmida

The Rev. Levi Okang'a Akhura

Bishop Vinton Anderson

Rev. Andreas Anggui

Pasteur Martin Beukenhorst

Ms Violet Sampa Bredt

Metr. Chrysostomos of Peristerion

Rev. Evanilza de Barros Correia

* Ms Beatrice Danquah

Pastor E. Farfán Figueroa

Rev. Julio Francisco

Ms Olga Ganaba

Dr Maxine Garrett

Mrs Makiko Hirata

Dr Mac Charles Jones

* Rev. Edea Kidu

Dr Birgitta Larsson

Ms Maryssa Mapanao-Camaddo

* Mr Michel Moukouyou-Kimbouala
 Dr Irmela Mueller-Stoeber
 * Frau Christine Oettel
 Dr Elsie Philip
 Bishop Eberhardt Renz
 Mrs Patricia Scoutas
 * His Holiness Pope Shenouda
 Rev. Marianna Szabo
 Rev. Martin Wessels
 * Drs Aukje Westra
 Rev. Maran Zau Yaw

Substitutes:

Rev. Dr J. Huttenga (for Drs Westra)
 Rev. Klaus Wilkens (for Ms Oettel)
 Dr Lois Wilson (for Ms Best)

Unit Advisers:

Dr Sigrun Mogedal

Committee on Programme Unit III

Rev. Dr Margot Kässmann – Moderator
 Bishop Paulo Ayres Mattos – Vice-Moderator

Ms Ruth Abraham
 Ms Ahn Chu Hye
 Sra. Cristina Bösenberg
 * Mr Ari Carvalho
 Metr. Chrysanthos of Limassol
 Bishop Dr Kálmán Csiha
 Ms Rosemary Davies-Izard
 * Metr. Dometian of Vidin
 Bishop Dr Klaus Engelhardt
 Rev. Wali Fejo
 Prof. Dr Milan Gerka
 Most Rev. John Ghose
 Citoyen Tusange Katonia
 Bishop Lavrentije of Sabac-Valjevo
 * Dr Shirley Liddell

Mr Peter Lodberg

* Dr Janice Love

Mrs Jan Malpas

Ms Priyanka Mendis

Rev. Dr Donald Miller

Rev. Dr Matitsoane Moseme

Very Rev. J. Omoyajowo

Rev. Valamotu Palu

Dr Park Jong-Wha

Archpriest V. Petliuchenko

Dr Heinz Rüegger

Rev. José da Silveira Salvador

* Pastor Carlos Sanchez

Ms Kristine Thompson

Pasteur Amos Zita

Substitutes:

Ms Kelly Koh (for Dr Love)

Unit Advisers:

Dr David Hallman

Mr G. van Maanen (EDCS)

Dr Friedholm Solms

Prof. Dr Adebisi Sowunmi

Committee on Programme Unit IV

Rt Rev. Drexel Gomez – Co-Moderator

Mrs Rosangela Jarjour – Co-Moderator

* Ms Kathryn Bannister

* Bishop Leslie Boseto

Rt Rev. Björn Bue

* Mr Andrew Mbugo Elisa

Frau Edeltraud Engel

* Rev. Duleep Fernando

Ms Silva Ghazelyan

M. Béalo Houmbouy

Mr Dimitre Kirov

Mr Wsiewolod Konach

Prof. George Koshy
Ms Margarita Neliubova
Rev. Rachel Paulin
* Pasteur J.-B. Rakotomaro
Rev. Eunice Santana
* Bishop Serapion
Rev. Dr Paul Sherry
Mr Harrys Sumbayak
Dr Bert Supit
Very Rev. Dr Georges Tsetsis
* Pasteur Michel Twagirayesu
Rev. Nove Vailaau
Rev. Angelique Walker-Smith
Metropolitan Yohanna Ibrahim

Substitutes:

Dr Adeeb Mitry (for Bishop Serapion)
Rev. Modeste Rakoto (for Pastor Rakotomaro)
Ms Kristen Williams (for Ms Bannister)

Unit Advisers:

Dr Elizabeth Ferris
Bishop Tilewa Johnson
Ms Aline Papazian

Committee on Public Issues

Dr Aaron Tolen – Moderator

Ms Cristina Bösenberg
Rev. Violet Sampa Bredt
Ms Makiko Hirata
Mr Albert Laham
Bishop Lavrentije
Dr Janice Love
Ms Nadeje Mandysova
Dr Park Jong Wha
Dr Georges Tsetsis
Dr Klaus Wilkens
Ms Tungane Williams
Dr Lois Wilson
Bishop Zacharias

Finance Committee

Ms Birgitta Rantakari – Moderator

Prof. Dr Anna Marie Aagaard

Bishop Vinton Anderson

Mr John Briggs

* Pastor Erasmo Farfán Figueroa

Dr Maxine Garrett

Ms Virginia Gcabashe

Rev. Dr Wesley Granberg-Michaelson

* Mr Béalo Houmbouy

Very Rev. Leonid Kishkovsky

Ms Maryssa Mapanao-Camaddo

* Dr Irmela Mueller-Stoeber

* Rt Rev. Dr Henry Okullu

Prof. Dr Park Jong-Wha

Rev. Eunice Santana

Ms Patricia Scoutas

Dr Bert Supit

Bishop Melvin Talbert

Dr Klaus Wilkens (in attendance)

(* not present at this meeting of the Finance Committee)

APPENDIX III

ALLOCATION OF SEATS FOR DELEGATES TO THE EIGHTH ASSEMBLY

	Membership	1991	1998
Africa			
African Methodist Episcopal Church	364,200	2	2
African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church	170,600	2	2
Armenian Apostolic Church (Etchmiadzin)	22,000	1	0
Christian Methodist Episcopal Church	61,000	2	2
Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Alexandria	270,000	2	2
United Methodist Church	2,008,750	3	5
Angola			
Evangelical Congregational Church in Angola	150,000	2	2
Benin			
Protestant Methodist Church in Benin	90,000	0	2
Botswana			
Church of the Province of Central Africa	605,000	3	3
Burundi			
Church of the Province of Burundi	300,000		2
Cameroon			
Evangelical Church of Cameroon	1,175,000	2	4
Presbyterian Church in Cameroon	469,438	2	2
Presbyterian Church of Cameroon	427,640	2	2
Union of Baptist Churches of Cameroon	86,000	2	2
Congo			
Evangelical Church of the Congo	135,792	2	2
Ethiopia			
Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus	1,625,994	3	5
Ethiopian Orthodox Church	40,000,000	13	25

	Membership	1991	1998
Gabon			
Evangelical Church of Gabon	140,000	2	2
Ghana			
Church of the Province of West Africa	300,000	2	2
Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ghana	150,000	2	2
Methodist Church, Ghana	490,000	2	2
Presbyterian Church of Ghana	452,000	2	2
Ivory Coast			
Protestant Methodist Church, Ivory Coast	112,000	2	2
Kenya			
African Christian Church and Schools, Kenya	50,000	1	2
African Israel Church Nineveh, Kenya	100,000	2	2
Church of the Province of Kenya	582,000	3	3
Methodist Church in Kenya	200,000	2	2
Presbyterian Church of East Africa	3,000,000	2	6
Lesotho			
Lesotho Evangelical Church	210,000	2	2
Liberia			
Lutheran Church in Liberia	25,000	1	1
Madagascar			
Church of Jesus Christ in Madagascar	1,350,000	4	4
Malagasy Lutheran Church	700,000	3	3
Namibia			
Evangelical Lutheran Church in Rep. of Namibia	200,500		2
Nigeria			
Church of the Brethren in Nigeria	40,000	1	2
Church of the Lord Aladura, Nigeria	3,000,000	3	6
Church of the Province of Nigeria	3,000,000	5	6
Methodist Church, Nigeria	1,000,000	3	3
Nigerian Baptist Convention	869,576	2	3
Presbyterian Church of Nigeria	500,000	2	2

	Membership	1991	1998
Rwanda			
Church of the Province of Rwanda	200,000		2
Presbyterian Church of Rwanda	500,000	2	2
Seychelles			
Church of the Province of the Indian Ocean	62,000	2	2
Sierra Leone			
Methodist Church of Sierra Leone	50,000	1	2
South Africa			
Church of the Province of Southern Africa	2,300,000	4	5
Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa	515,000	3	3
Evangelical Presbyterian Church in South Africa	30,000	1	2
Methodist Church of Southern Africa	1,500,000	4	4
Moravian Church in South Africa	102,132	1	2
Presbyterian Church of Africa, South Africa	200,000	2	2
Presbyterian Church of Southern Africa	180,000	2	2
Reformed Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa	110,000	2	2
United Congregational Church of Southern Africa	382,412	2	2
Sudan			
Presbyterian Church in the Sudan	67,000	2	2
Province of the Episcopal Church of the Sudan	1,000,000	3	3
Tanzania			
Church of the Province of Tanzania	647,000	3	3
Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania	4,000,000	3	7
Moravian Church in Tanzania	114,000	2	2
Togo			
Evangelical Church of Togo	92,000	2	2
Uganda			
Church of Uganda	3,000,000	5	6
Zaire			
Baptist Community of West Zaïre	374,000	2	2
Community of Disciples of Christ, Zaire	650,000	3	3

	Membership	1991	1998
Community of Light, Zaire	180,000	2	2
Episcopal Baptist Community, Zaire	150,000	2	2
Evangelical Community, Zaire	115,310	1	2
Kimbanguist Church, Zaire	6,500,000	7	8
Mennonite Community, Zaire	40,000	1	2
Presbyterian Community, Zaire	30,000	1	2
Zambia			
Reformed Church in Zambia	400,000		2
United Church of Zambia	100,000	2	2
Zimbabwe			
Evangelical Lutheran Church in Zimbabwe	60,000		2
Methodist Church in Zimbabwe	137,669	2	2
Reformed Church in Zimbabwe	60,000		2
TOTAL	88,281,013	160	215
Asia			
Armenian Apostolic Church (Etchmiadzin)	40,000	1	1
Coptic Orthodox Church	70,000	1	2
Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople	800,000	2	3
Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch	20,000	1	0
Holy Apostolic Catholic Assyrian Church of the East	50,000	2	1
Mar Thoma Syrian Church of Malabar	15,000		
Serbian Orthodox Church	200,000	2	2
Syrian Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch	700,000	2	3
United Methodist Church	172,276	2	2
Australia			
Anglican Church of Australia	3,775,000	6	7
Churches of Christ in Australia	80,000	1	2
Uniting Church in Australia	1,386,000	5	4
Bangladesh			
Bangladesh Baptist Sangha	30,000	1	2

	Membership	1991	1998
China, People's Republic of			
China Christian Council	5,000,000		7
Hong Kong			
Hong Kong Council of the Church of Christ in China	54,000	1	2
India			
Church of North India	600,000	3	3
Church of South India	1,471,000	4	4
Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church	2,200,000	4	5
Mar Thoma Syrian Church of Malabar	875,000	3	3
Methodist Church in India	600,000	3	3
Samavesam of Telugu Baptist Churches	577,060	3	3
United Evangelical Lutheran Churches in India	1,500,000	4	4
Indonesia			
Batak Protestant Christian Church (HKBP)	2,000,000	4	5
Christian Church of Central Sulawesi (GKST)	100,000	2	2
Christian Evangelical Church in Minahasa (GMIM),	730,000	3	3
Christian Protestant Church in Indonesia (GKPI)	97,054	2	2
East Java Christian Church (GKJW)	140,000	2	2
Evangelical Christian Church in Halmahera	497,000	2	2
Evangelical Christian Church in Irian Jaya	600,000	2	3
Evangelical Church of Sangir Talaud (GMIST)	190,000	2	2
Javanese Christian Churches (GKJ)	121,500	2	2
Kalimantan Evangelical Church (GKE)	213,000	2	2
Karo Batak Protestant Church (GBKP)	250,000	2	2
Nias Protestant Christian Church (BNKP)	250,000	2	2
Pasundan Christian Church (GKP)	30,000	1	2
Protestant Church in Indonesia (GPI)	604,578	5	3
Protestant Church in South-East Sulawesi (GEPSULTRA)	25,638		2
Protestant Church in the Moluccas (GPM)	575,000	3	3
Protestant Church in Western Indonesia (GPIB)	500,000		2
Protestant Evangelical Church in Timor (GMIT)	800,000	3	3
Simalungun Protestant Christian Church (GKPS)	180,851	2	2
The Indonesian Christian Church (HKI)	342,300	2	2
Toraja Church	350,000	2	2

	Membership	1991	1998
Japan			
Holy Catholic Church in Japan	57,644	2	2
Japanese Orthodox Church	25,000	1	2
United Church of Christ in Japan	192,000	2	2
Korea, Republic of			
Korean Methodist Church	400,000	4	2
Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea	170,000	2	2
Presbyterian Church of Korea	600,000	4	3
Malaysia			
Methodist Church in Malaysia	230,000	2	2
Myanmar			
Church of the Province of Myanmar	27,000	1	2
Methodist Church, Upper Myanmar	50,000	1	2
Myanmar Baptist Convention	1,044,430	3	4
New Zealand			
Associated Churches of Christ, New Zealand	2,750	1	1
Baptist Union of New Zealand	35,900	1	2
Methodist Church of New Zealand	120,000	2	2
Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa/New Zealand	112,000	2	2
The Anglican Church in Aotearoa/New Zealand and Polynesia	856,000	3	3
Pakistan			
Church of Pakistan	500,000	2	2
Presbyterian Church of Pakistan	100,000	2	2
Philippines			
Episcopal Church in the Philippines	150,000	2	2
Evangelical Methodist Church in the Philippines	110,000	2	2
Philippine Independent Church	4,500,000	6	7
United Church of Christ in the Philippines	1,400,000	2	4

	Membership	1991	1998
Sri Lanka			
Church of Ceylon	50,000	1	1
Methodist Church, Sri Lanka	25,000	1	1
Taiwan			
Presbyterian Church in Taiwan	431,226	2	2
Thailand			
Church of Christ in Thailand	67,200	2	2
TOTAL	40,068,407	149	171
Caribbean			
African Methodist Episcopal Church	15,250	1	0
African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church	60,000	2	2
Christian Methodist Episcopal Church	5,300	1	0
Episcopal Church USA	103,561	1	2
Ethiopian Orthodox Church	25,000	1	1
Antigua and Barbuda			
Methodist Church, Caribbean & Americas	312,500	2	2
Moravian Church, Eastern West Indies Province	29,000	1	2
Caribbean			
Church in the Province of the West Indies	1,780,000	4	5
Jamaica			
Moravian Church in Jamaica	25,000	1	1
United Church in Jamaica and The Cayman Islands	40,000	1	2
Suriname			
Moravian Church in Suriname	57,000	2	2
Trinidad and Tobago			
Presbyterian Church in Trinidad and Tobago	40,000	1	2
TOTAL	2,492,611	18	21

	Membership	1991	1998
Europe			
Armenian Apostolic Church (Cilicia)	25,000	1	1
Armenian Apostolic Church (Etchmiadzin)	164,000	1	2
Bulgarian Orthodox Church	25,100	1	1
Coptic Orthodox Church	35,000	1	1
Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople	1,500,000	4	4
Ethiopian Orthodox Church	35,000	1	1
Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch	40,000	1	1
Holy Apostolic Catholic Assyrian Church of the East	50,000	0	1
Mar Thoma Syrian Church of Malabar	1,300		
Romanian Orthodox Church	400,000	2	2
Russian Orthodox Church	30,000		1
Serbian Orthodox Church	500,000	2	2
Syrian Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch	170,000	1	2
United Methodist Church	139,388	2	2
Albania			
Orthodox Autocephalous Church of Albania	400,000		2
Armenia			
Armenian Apostolic Church (Etchmiadzin)	4,756,000	7	7
Austria			
Evangelical Church-Augsburg & Helvetic Confessions	359,354	2	2
Old Catholic Church of Austria	18,000	1	1
Belgium			
United Protestant Church of Belgium	40,000	1	2
Bulgaria			
Bulgarian Orthodox Church	7,950,000	9	9
CRSL			
Orthodox Church in Czech Lands and Slovakia	53,613	2	2

	Membership	1991	1998
Czech Republic			
Czechoslovak Hussite Church	500,000	2	2
Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren	193,000	2	2
Silesian Evangelical Church-Augsburg Confession	48,000	1	2
Denmark			
Baptist Union of Denmark	12,000	1	1
Evangelical Lutheran Church of Denmark	4,540,300	6	7
Estonia			
Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church	225,000	2	2
Finland			
Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland	4,375,047	6	7
Orthodox Church of Finland	56,086	2	2
France			
Evangelical Church-Augsburg Confession			
Alsace/Lorraine	220,000	2	2
Evangelical Lutheran Church of France	35,000	1	2
Reformed Church of Alsace and Lorraine, France	35,000	1	2
Reformed Church of France	400,000	2	2
Georgia			
Georgian Orthodox Church	5,000,000	7	7
Germany			
Catholic Diocese of Old Catholics in Germany	28,000	1	2
Evangelical Church in Germany (United)	14,276,000	18	14
Evangelical Church in Germany (Reformed)	422,000	2	2
Evangelical Church in Germany (Lutheran)	14,215,000	18	14
Mennonite Church, Germany	10,000	1	1
Greece			
Church of Greece	10,003,402	10	11
Greek Evangelical Church	5,000	1	1

	Membership	1991	1998
Hungary			
Baptist Union of Hungary	41,400	1	2
Lutheran Church in Hungary	430,000	2	2
Reformed Church in Hungary	2,000,000	4	5
Iceland			
Evangelical Lutheran Church of Iceland	243,675	2	2
Ireland			
Church of Ireland	334,000	2	2
Italy			
Evangelical Methodist Church of Italy	8,000	1	1
Waldensian Church, Italy	48,600	1	2
Latvia			
Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia	350,000	2	2
Netherlands			
European Continental Province of the Moravian Church	21,000		1
Evangelical Lutheran Church, Netherlands	35,000	1	2
Mennonite Church in the Netherlands	30,800	1	2
Netherlands Reformed Church	2,300,000	5	5
Old Catholic Church of the Netherlands	10,000	1	1
Reformed Churches in the Netherlands	750,000	3	3
Remonstrant Brotherhood, Netherlands	20,000	1	1
Norway			
Church of Norway	3,700,000	6	7
Poland			
Autocephalic Orthodox Church in Poland	1,000,000	3	3
Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession, Poland	80,000	2	2
Old Catholic Mariavite Church in Poland	24,000	1	1
Polish Catholic Church in Poland	34,000	1	2

	Membership	1991	1998
Romania			
Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession, Romania	22,000	2	1
Evangelical Synodal Presbyterial Church A.B., Romania	32,000	1	2
Reformed Church of Romania	800,000	3	3
Romanian Orthodox Church	19,762,135	14	17
Russia			
Euro-Asiatic Federation of Evangelical Christians/Baptists	1,094,000	3	4
Russian Orthodox Church	100,000,000	35	25
Slovak Republic			
Reformed Christian Church in Slovakia	130,000	2	2
Slovak Evangelical Church-Augsburg Confession	329,117	2	2
Spain			
Spanish Evangelical Church	7,700	1	1
Sweden			
Church of Sweden	7,631,000	9	9
Mission Covenant Church of Sweden	184,000	2	2
Switzerland			
Old Catholic Church of Switzerland	14,000	1	1
Swiss Protestant Church Federation	2,656,824	5	6
Turkey			
Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople	5,000	1	1
United Kingdom			
Baptist Union of Great Britain	313,878	2	2
Church in Wales	200,000	2	2
Church of England	25,500,000	20	20
Church of Scotland	1,220,000	4	4
Methodist Church in Ireland	60,000	2	2
Moravian Church in Great Britain and Ireland	4,315	1	1

	Membership	1991	1998
Presbyterian Church of Wales	115,750	2	2
Scottish Congregational Church	30,000	1	2
Scottish Episcopal Church	55,000	2	2
The Methodist Church, Great Britain	1,321,383	4	4
Union of Welsh Independents, UK	90,000	2	2
United Free Church of Scotland	14,188	1	1
United Reformed Church in the United Kingdom	370,000	2	2
Yugoslavia – former			
Reformed Christian Church in Yugoslavia	22,000	1	1
Serbian Orthodox Church, Yugoslavia	6,500,000	8	8
Slovak Evangelical Church-Augsburg Confession in Yugoslavia	50,000	2	2
TOTAL	251,285,355	302	312
Latin America			
Armenian Apostolic Church (Cilicia)	10,000	1	0
Armenian Apostolic Church (Etchmiadzin)	200,000		2
Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople	150,000	2	2
Episcopal Church USA	25,977	2	1
Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch	1,500,000	4	4
Syrian Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch	100,000	1	2
Argentina			
Evangelical Church of the River Plate, Argentina	60,000	2	2
Evangelical Methodist Church, Argentina	35,000	1	2
Brazil			
Episcopal Church of Brazil	95,000	2	2
Evangelical Church of Lutheran Confession	1,000,000	3	3
Latin American Reformed Church, Brazil	19,000	1	1
Methodist Church in Brazil	300,000	2	2
Chile			
Evangelical-Lutheran Church in Chile	3,000	1	1
Free Pentecostal Mission Church of Chile	96,341	1	2

	Membership	1991	1998
Pentecostal Church of Chile	90,000	2	2
Pentecostal Mission Church, Chile	20,000	1	1
Mexico			
Methodist Church of Mexico	60,000	2	2
Nicaragua			
Baptist Convention of Nicaragua	14,270	1	1
Moravian Church in Nicaragua	69,723	1	2
TOTAL	3,848,311	30	34
Middle East			
Armenian Apostolic Church (Etchmiadzin)	118,000	1	2
Holy Apostolic Catholic Assyrian Church of the East	150,000	1	2
Mar Thoma Syrian Church of Malabar	38,800		1
Cyprus			
Church of Cyprus	601,300	2	3
Egypt			
Coptic Orthodox Church	6,200,000	8	8
Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Alexandria	10,000	1	1
The Synod of the Nile of the Evangelical Church	200,000	2	2
Iran			
Evangelical Church of Iran	3,000	1	1
Jerusalem			
Episcopal Church in Jerusalem & Middle East	37,000	1	2
Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem	260,000	2	2
Lebanon			
Armenian Apostolic Church (Cilicia), Lebanon	650,000	3	3
National Evangelical Synod of Syria & Lebanon	20,000	1	1
Union of the Armenian Evangelical Churches	9,500	1	1

	Membership	1991	1998
Syria			
Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch, Syria	1,100,000	3	4
Syrian Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch, Syria	300,000	2	2
TOTAL	9,697,600	29	35
North America			
Armenian Apostolic Church (Cilicia)	500,000	1	2
Armenian Apostolic Church (Etchmiadzin)	400,000	1	2
Bulgarian Orthodox Church	25,100	1	1
Coptic Orthodox Church	240,000	1	2
Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople	2,800,000	5	6
Ethiopian Orthodox Church	25,000	2	1
Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch	450,000	2	2
Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church	100,000	1	2
Mar Thoma Syrian Church of Malabar	33,370		1
Romanian Orthodox Church	700,000	2	2
Serbian Orthodox Church	800,000	3	3
Syrian Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch	160,000	1	2
Canada			
Anglican Church of Canada	2,100,000	4	5
Canadian Yearly Meeting - Society of Friends	1,000	1	1
Christian Church (Disciples, Canada)	4,665	1	1
Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church Abroad, Canada	55,000	2	2
Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada	199,609	2	2
Presbyterian Church in Canada	305,370	2	2
United Church of Canada	2,000,000	4	5
USA			
African Methodist Episcopal Church, USA	2,420,550	5	5
African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, USA	1,769,400	4	5
American Baptist Churches USA	3,033,010	5	6
Christian Church (Disciples, USA)	1,369,250	4	4
Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, USA	959,700	3	3
Church of the Brethren, USA	148,000	2	2

	Membership	1991	1998
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America	5,212,785	7	8
Friends General Conference, USA	32,000	1	2
Friends United Meeting, USA	94,200	2	2
Holy Apostolic Catholic Assyrian Church of the East	100,000	2	2
Hungarian Reformed Church in America	11,000	1	1
International Council of Community Churches, USA	153,500	2	2
International Evangelical Church, USA	200,000	2	2
Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Church Abroad	27,000	1	2
Moravian Church, USA (Northern Province)	30,680	1	2
Moravian Church, USA (Southern Province)	33,714	1	2
National Baptist Convention of America	7,000,000	8	9
National Baptist Convention USA Inc.	12,600,000	12	13
Orthodox Church in America	1,000,000	3	3
Polish National Catholic Church, USA	100,000	2	2
Presbyterian Church (USA)	5,021,000	8	8
Progressive National Baptist Convention Inc., USA	1,400,000	4	4
Reformed Church in America	350,000	2	2
The Protestant Episcopal Church in the USA	2,377,357	5	5
United Church of Christ, USA	3,060,000	5	6
United Methodist Church, USA	17,330,232	18	16
TOTAL	76,732,492	146	162

Pacific

Cook Islands

Cook Islands Christian Church	13,000	1	1
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Fiji

Methodist Church in Fiji	262,000	2	2
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French Polynesia

Evangelical Church of French Polynesia	95,000	2	2
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	Membership	1991	1998
Kiribati			
Kiribati Protestant Church	30,000	1	2
Marshall Islands			
United Church of Christ – Congregational in the Marshall Isles	39,000		2
New Caledonia			
Evangelical Church in New Caledonia & Loyalty Isle	40,000	1	2
Papua New Guinea			
Evangelical Lutheran Church of Papua New Guinea	550,000		3
United Church in Papua New Guinea & Solomon Island	600,000	2	3
Samoa (American)			
Congregational Christian Church in American Samoa	34,000	1	2
Samoa (Western)			
Congregational Christian Church in Samoa	90,000	2	2
Methodist Church in Samoa	31,000	1	2
Solomon Islands			
Church of Melanesia	69,000	2	2
Tonga			
Methodist Church in Tonga	38,000	1	2
Tuvalu			
Tuvalu Christian Church	9,000	1	1
Vanuatu			
Presbyterian Church of Vanuatu	100,000	1	2
TOTAL	2,000,000	18	30
WORLD TOTAL	474,405,789	852	980

APPENDIX IV

STATEMENT ON UPROOTED PEOPLE

A MOMENT TO CHOOSE: RISKING TO BE WITH UPROOTED PEOPLE

On every continent, people are being torn from their homes by violence and despair. Millions of people have been displaced and wait for a chance to go home. As wars drag on, economies deteriorate and environments become more fragile, solutions for the uprooted are becoming more elusive. Governments in every region are closing their borders. Too many churches are also turning away from the strangers arriving on their doorsteps.

Behind the massive global dimensions of today's uprooting are individual stories of pain, of families being torn apart, of despair and suffering. More than one in every fifty human beings is now a refugee or international migrant. Most are women, youth, and children. The vast majority leave countries in the South and remain in the South.

People leave their communities for many reasons and are called by different names – refugees, internally displaced, asylum-seekers, economic migrants. As churches, we lift up all those who are *compelled* by severe political, economic and social conditions to leave their land and their culture – regardless of the labels they are given by others. Uprooted people are those forced to leave their communities: those who flee because of persecution and war, those who are forcibly displaced because of environmental devastation and those who are compelled to seek sustenance in a city or abroad because they cannot survive at home. The focus of this statement is on the uprooted, acknowledging that many others remain in extraordinarily difficult situations.

Although it has accelerated in recent years, the movement of people has been a permanent feature of human history. The reality is that we all live in multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, multi-religious, multi-lingual societies – though sometimes we don't *see* the strangers as Christ among us. When churches close themselves

to the strangers in their midst, when they no longer strive for an inclusive community as a sign and foretaste of the Kingdom to come, they lose their reason to be.

We challenge the churches worldwide to rediscover their identity, their integrity and their vocation as the church of the stranger. Service to uprooted people has always been recognized as diaconia – although it has been peripheral to the life of many churches. But we affirm that it is also an ecclesial matter. *We are a church of the Stranger - the Church of Jesus Christ the Stranger.* (Matthew 25:31-46)

As government policies become more restrictive and public hostility against foreigners intensifies in every region, churches are challenged as never before to make a choice: will they choose to be the church of the stranger and take the side of the uprooted or will they choose to turn away or ignore the problem? Will they just refer questions about uprooted to their programme for refugees or will they be the expression of the universality of the Gospel and home to those who seek to claim their human dignity?

Koinonia is costly and challenges us to risk the consequences of giving of ourselves for others. In some countries, to work with the uprooted is dangerous. In many places, to respond to the uprooted is not popular with local congregations who are concerned with the many pressing problems ‘among our own people.’ When we challenge the causes of injustice that uproot people, the church must be prepared to pay the price of confronting established powers and privilege.

This statement is directed to churches. As a Christian household, we must acknowledge and confess our failings. And we must move on to conversion and renewal. The credibility of our witness and advocacy must be based on our experience and engagement as well as on our convictions.

Uprooted people remind us that ours is an unjust world. The deterioration of social, political and human rights conditions makes it imperative that we confront the sinfulness of unjust systems and structures.

WE ARE OUTRAGED BY THE VIOLENCE AND INJUSTICE WHICH UPROOTS PEOPLE AND BY THE HUMAN SUFFERING IT CAUSES

The multiple causes of forced displacement:

- 1. War, civil conflict, human rights violations, colonial domination and persecution for political, religious, ethnic or social reasons characterize every region and are major causes of forced human displacement today.*

Previously suppressed ethnic and national conflicts have exploded into open warfare over the past decade. Religion and ethnicity are used to uphold narrow nationalistic goals and divide pluralistic societies. Civilians are increasingly the victims of the violence – due in part to the widespread availability of weapons and anti-personnel mines. Millions have been uprooted by the violence: 30 million are internally displaced within their countries' borders while another 19.5 million have become refugees in other countries.

Violence directed at persons, communities and entire peoples often involves destruction of the social fabric, the economic infrastructure and the natural environments of nations. This destruction of community is the most dramatic cause for forced migration.

In war and conflict situations sexual violence against women and girls becomes a strategy of warfare in which rape of women and girls is used to further political agendas, to humiliate men as well as women, and to displace and destroy community life.

Widespread violations of human rights remain a powerful motivation for seeking asylum. In many countries, women, men and children are denied fair trial, tortured, abducted, and assassinated. Women and girls are often sexually abused and violated.

The deliberate displacement of indigenous and colonized peoples in order to expropriate their lands and resources continues to be a brutal form of forced uprooting of people.

- 2. Severe breakdown of economic and social conditions that once provided people with the means to survive in their traditional communities and in their own countries is accelerating the movement of people.*

Underlying this breakdown in conditions is the globalization of the world economy. This process continues to reproduce great and growing inequalities in wealth and incomes within and among countries. Emerging trade relations are working to the disadvantage of economically weaker countries.

Major technological innovations are making production and services more «efficient» but contribute to jobless growth. Permanent unemployment is increasing in all regions, leading to increased marginalization, exclusion and movement of people. Capital intensive investment provides too few job opportunities for the growing number of working-age people.

Burgeoning debt, coupled with externally imposed structural adjustment measures and restrictive fiscal policies are making it difficult for people to survive. At the same time many governments are divesting themselves of responsibility for social programmes. The choice by governments to reduce expenditures on social needs such as health and education while maintaining or expanding military spending contributes to impoverishment and, ultimately, to destabilization.

The human impact of structural adjustment programmes is particularly evidenced by the rise in infant mortality and malnutrition, preventable diseases and illiteracy among the «developing» world's children. The major burden is placed on women -the main providers of food- who struggle to make ends meet to feed their families. More and more people have no option but to leave their communities in search of work and food.

Some 10 million people are displaced each year as a result of intentional «development» schemes, which include flooding of large areas by dams and replacement of subsistence farming by mechanized agribusinesses.

3. Environmental devastation has emerged as a powerful motivation for large-scale human displacement.

Destruction of our natural environment - including deforestation, loss of top soil, desertification - and degradation of agricultural land beyond restoration are making traditional environments unlivable. Estimates indicate that today, there are 10 to 25 million people who have been displaced for environmental reasons.

Manufacturing, testing and deployment of weaponry in both «peacetime» military exercises and in war have serious effects on the environment and make sustainable land use for agriculture and human survival impossible. Renewed

nuclear testing continues to threaten survival of communities and produce permanent displacement of people.

Rising sea levels and increased intensity of storms, cyclones, tidal waves and earthquakes forecast greater displacement in the near future. These anticipated results of global warming, if not arrested, will lead to the disappearance of island nations and other densely populated lowlands within the next decades.

Depletion of natural resources, coupled with economic degradation not only forces people to leave their communities, but also contributes to conflicts over increasingly scarce resources.

The turning away from uprooted people:

As the numbers of uprooted people increase worldwide, the will to provide protection for them is declining sharply. Governments in all regions, led by those in countries of the industrialized North, are imposing restrictive immigration controls and draconian «deterrence measures» to prevent the arrival of asylum-seekers and migrants. As a result, people in need of protection for their lives and human rights are being formally excluded and stigmatized by governments. There is a global trend of turning away from taking responsibility to address both the causes and consequences of forced human displacement. While societies ultimately cannot cope with unlimited numbers of displaced people, too little attention and too few resources are directed to preventing and resolving the conditions which uproot people in the first place.

In all regions of the globe, public solidarity with those fleeing violence and poverty is eroding. A dangerous rise in racist and xenophobic hostility is often expressed in violence against refugees and immigrants. They frequently become scapegoats for many social and economic tensions in society and targets for growing hatred.

In many countries, the combination of public hostility and restrictive governmental measures is posing a threat to democratic values and jurisprudence. Measures proposed or implemented to control access by foreigners usually also restrict civil and human rights of citizens and residents.

International legal standards are not upheld with regard to the particular needs of uprooted women and children for protection.

Today, some religious leaders either avoid or choose not to take stands against community violence towards foreigners or «others». Too many religious institutions, including churches, remain indifferent. Too few congregations welcome or include newcomers of different racial, ethnic, national origins. Numerous churches and individual Christians remain associated with structures that exclude and oppress people.

The human consequences of uprooting:

For those uprooted from their communities, the loss of human dignity is an overpowering consequence of displacement, regardless of class or gender. This loss of dignity is often exacerbated by paternalistic attitudes on the part of those trying to help.

Uprooted people experience multiple losses: of family, friends and community; of familiar spiritual, religious and cultural structures that nurture and define basic human identity; of social status; of property, employment and economic resources. They usually have to deal with many consequences of displacement all at once. For rural and indigenous people, loss of land results in loss of economic power, cultural and spiritual identity.

Violence, rejection and racist hostility against uprooted people compound traumas of forced migration by restricting mobility, participation in society and the ability to obtain employment and services in places of transit or refuge. This violence and injustice is a part of the rising tide of racism and xenophobia world wide which determines the privilege and security for some but consigns others to insecurity and exclusion.

The disruptions facing people fleeing persecution and warfare are especially severe. Women and children are the most affected. The threat and effects of sexual violence against uprooted women and girls violates their human dignity and integrity and undermines their participation in society. Their physical, emotional and psychological well-being is undermined.

The organized trafficking of men, women and children is a renewed form of slavery, with the attendant destruction of the dignity and well-being of individuals and families.

The forceful separation of children from family and community support systems makes them particularly vulnerable to threats to life and security. Interruption

in education results in gaps of knowledge when children remain in refugee camps and in war or conflict situations. This has long term consequences for children and their societies.

The violence and injustice which uproots people and the resultant human suffering challenge us to restate our convictions as the basis for Christian response.

AS CHRISTIANS WE HOLD THESE CONVICTIONS

1. We affirm the sacredness of all human life and the sanctity of creation

«In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth....and God saw it was good....So God created humankind in his image...» (Genesis 1)

All people are made in the image of God. Respect for the human dignity and the worth of every person regardless of age, abilities, ethnicity, gender, class, nationality, race and religion is foundational to our faith. Our faith compels us to ensure that human life, physical security and personal safety are upheld in law and institutions.

No society can live in peace with itself or with the world without a full awareness of the worth and dignity of every human person and of the sacredness of human life.

With the gift of the resources of the earth goes the responsibility to safeguard and nurture creation. When creation is not nurtured, people are displaced.

Christians are encouraged by the prophetic tradition and by Revelation chapter 21 which gives us an image of a God who is continually «making all things new», and who summons us to participate in His work of renewal.

2. The Biblical values of love, justice and peace compel us to renew Christian response to the marginalized and excluded.

«‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind’ This is the greatest and first commandment. And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbour as yourself.’» (Matthew 22:37-39)

The realm of God is a vision of a just and united world. The challenge of prophesy and of Jesus' teachings is to liberate and equip Christians to have the courage to work for alternative community, to work for peace and justice which is to address the causes which uproot people.

At the heart of Jesus teaching is the commandment to love God and to love one's neighbour as oneself. Christians are called to respond to the Good News of God's option for the marginalized and excluded. Jesus' love is unconditional. Jesus did not hesitate to pay the price of self-giving love.

The prophet Micah (6:8) summons the faithful to do justice, to love kindness and to walk humbly with God. There is no peace without justice nor full justice without peace. (Amos 5:24) Our faith compels us to struggle for justice and peace for all; to work for a world where economic, political and social institutions serve people rather than the other way around.

In the jubilee tradition (Leviticus 25, Deuteronomy 15, Isaiah 61:1-2), compassion is linked to recommitment to justice and peace. The jubilee is a new beginning, a starting point for a process of reconciliation and rebuilding community, giving birth to new hope.

3. The Biblical challenge to build inclusive community requires us to accompany the uprooted in service and witness.

So then you are no longer strangers and aliens in a foreign land, but fellow citizens with God's people, members of God's household. (Ephesians 2:19)

Jesus himself was rejected by many of his own people, because he identified with the marginalized and excluded. The Gospel tell us that Jesus made the love for strangers and enemies a hallmark of the inclusive community of the children of God. In this, He followed the Old Testament tradition of receiving the stranger. (Exodus 23:9; Leviticus 19:33-34; Deuteronomy 24:14-19; Jeremiah 5-7)

Christians are called to be with the oppressed, the persecuted, the marginalized and the excluded in their suffering, their struggles and their hopes. A ministry of *accompaniment* and advocacy with uprooted people upholds the principles of prophetic witness and service - *diaconia*. We cannot desert the «needy», nor set boundaries to compassion. (Hebrews 13:2, Luke 10:25-37, Romans 12:13)

While God's people chose to sojourn to pursue their call to mission, service and promise, the faith journeys of people who suffer uprooting are a heritage of the whole church. As our understanding of God's love has been illustrated throughout the history of the church by Old Testament stories of exile, so too must the church today receive the word of God through the witness of uprooted people.

Proclaiming the Gospel of hope for all people and remembering the communion in Jesus Christ, through his death and resurrection, churches live their vocation as viable and inclusive communities, accompanying people, sharing their hope and suffering, and providing space for them.

Our Christian convictions compel a renewal of church action to uphold life and dignity, to work for justice and peace, and to create community with uprooted people.

WE CALL CHRISTIANS AND CHURCHES TO TAKE ACTION

Action begins with self-critical review of the successes and failures and a renewal of churches' responses to uprooted people and the causes of their displacement. Renewal requires bringing theological and Biblical reflection on the causes of displacement and needs of uprooted people into the centre of the life of the church. Issues of uprooted people must be brought to policy and decision-making bodies and to groups which allocate resources. Church bodies and programmes addressing these concerns must be established or strengthened.

The task is ecumenical and global. Churches must work together and in partnership with other sectors of civil society. Many different organizations are deeply engaged in solidarity with uprooted people; no one sector can respond alone to the systemic causes of uprooting.

Seeking viable solutions to the causes and consequences of uprooted people means also to engage with governments. This requires that churches examine how they can maintain their convictions while negotiating compromise which is part of national and international policy debates.

We challenge ourselves, the member churches of the World Council of Churches and related ecumenical organizations to join in campaigns to uphold life and dignity, promote justice and peace in our world, and accompany uprooted people.

The actions which Christians and churches can take will vary across the different national and regional contexts and will differ according to the capacity of churches. We ask churches to support each other and work together.

1. UPHOLDING LIFE AND HUMAN DIGNITY OF UPROOTED PEOPLE

We challenge member churches to protect and promote respect for all uprooted people: refugees, internally displaced persons and migrants.

A. Protecting Lives and Safety

- Offer shelter or refuge for uprooted people.
- Provide sponsorship for refugee settlement.
- Extend sanctuary to people in danger.
- Ensure protection of uprooted women and girls against all forms of violence.
- Advocate for full legal protection of uprooted children and children in armed conflict.
- Challenge government policies which seek to limit protection of uprooted people.

B. Defending Legal and Human Rights

- Assist individuals and families to pursue legal procedures to claim asylum or safe haven.
- Advocate at borders, airports, refugee camps where uprooted people are at risk of abuse.
- Support migrants and displaced persons to claim their rights as human beings according to national and international standards.
- Engage with governments to provide protection by using relevant international instruments.
- Speak out, make declarations, and adopt resolutions to condemn and delegitimize violence against foreigners.

C. Promoting International Standards

- Promote ratification and full implementation of the UN Convention and Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees.
- Promote ratification and implementation of the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families.
- Utilize the International Convention on the Rights of the Child in ministry and advocacy with uprooted children.

- Participate in efforts to develop international and national mechanisms to provide protection for uprooted people –those internally displaced or who cannot be voluntarily repatriated– not included under existing standards.

2. WORKING FOR JUSTICE AND PEACE

We call on churches to take action to address the root causes of forced displacement.

A. Studying the political, economic, social and environmental reasons for uprooting

- Listen to and understand stories of uprooted people about the reasons they left and their hopes for return.
- Examine the role of governments in creating situations which uproot people.
- Assess the churches' possibilities to confront root causes.

B. Engaging fully in peacemaking and conflict resolution

- Conduct education on peace and global responsibility in churches.
- Work with trained practitioners of conflict resolution, mediation and negotiation to create safe social spaces for humanitarian relief, in refugee camps and for the reconstruction of civil society.
- Establish «communities of peace».
- Build alliances with community based groups, organizations, and trade unions active in human rights, economic justice, racial and ethnic justice and peace.
- Advocate for responsible international action, particularly through the United Nations, to prevent and to resolve conflicts so as to enable people to stay or return to their home communities.

C. Working for Economic and Social Fullness of Life

- Support local alternatives for economic self-reliance.
- Promote respect for the rights and full participation of women as part of building viable communities.
- Establish dialogue with environmental concerns groups and legal experts to consider ways of addressing environmental causes of displacement.

D. Promoting the right of people to remain in safety and dignity in their homeland.

- Urge that trade, aid and investment policies support creating sustainable conditions for people to remain.
- Advocate for the rights of indigenous and colonized peoples to remain on or return to their lands.

3. CREATING COMMUNITY WITH THE UPROOTED

We call on churches to accompany uprooted people, by providing diaconal services, support and solidarity without discrimination.

A. Accompanying uprooted people in decisions to remain, leave and return

- Maintain an active presence with people who choose to remain in or leave their homeland.
- Advocate and monitor the safety of return and reintegration in sustainable communities, including accompanying uprooted people back to their homelands and reporting on that process.

B. Providing services to respond to material, social and spiritual needs.

- Ensure the full participation of uprooted people in planning, implementation and evaluation of programmes and services and ecumenical initiatives.
- Provide pastoral care and crisis intervention services to individuals and families.
- Promote the availability of programmes meeting the specific needs of uprooted women, and empower their participation in community.
- Advocate that children separated from their families remain in family-like situations.
- Encourage the availability of programmes essential for the spiritual, emotional, physical and educational development of uprooted children.
- Advocate with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the International Organization for Migration and other international organizations for adequate provisions of material assistance and promotion of human dignity of uprooted people.

C. Supporting initiatives of uprooted people.

- Provide community development opportunities to enable uprooted people to become self-reliant.
- Empower individuals and organizations of uprooted people to define and respond to their own needs and issues.

- Support uprooted people from different faiths to practice their religious beliefs.
- Build alliances with organizations and communities of uprooted people.

D. Being Church Together with Uprooted Christians

- Take the necessary steps to welcome and encourage uprooted Christians to participate fully in the life of the church - from the congregational level to national leadership.
- Embrace the diversity of Christian traditions.
- Facilitate uprooted Christian communities to re-establish their congregations.
- Work with other churches in developing initiatives with uprooted people.
- Receive the spiritual gifts of uprooted people.

E. Engaging in Living in Diversity

- Convene and participate in encounters between host and uprooted people to break-down prejudices, fears and myths.
- Organize campaigns to counter and prevent racism, xenophobia and hostility towards uprooted people.
- Promote international exchanges of church personnel with and between regions.

F. Restoring Public Solidarity

- Promote establishment of «Refugee Day/week» and/or «Migrant week» in churches, communities and countries.
- Hold inter-faith dialogue and where possible, services and prayers.
- Develop educational and awareness building activities on uprooted people for the whole life of the church.

SOME SIGNS OF HOPE

Even as many in our societies turn away or ignore the strangers in their midst, some Christians and some churches are choosing to be on the side of uprooted people. Some churches have identified themselves with strangers and exiles for centuries.

Signs of hope are emerging in community and church initiatives around the world to create new ministries, new vehicles of ecumenical cooperation, and new ways of upholding human dignity and creating sustainable community:

- In numerous risky situations, Christians and churches are taking stands to be on the side of the uprooted. Some have opened their church buildings and their homes to uprooted people.
- A number of Christians and churches have assumed great risks by acting in civil disobedience to protect the uprooted.
- Many churches and community groups are seeking to aid and protect those whose lives and safety are at risk because of forced repatriation or abuse.
- Some churches are daring to confront the racism and xenophobia among their own membership.
- Survival strategies of uprooted women and men point to their ability to resist assaults to their dignity and to mobilize themselves to address their concerns.
- In the North and the South, religious institutions, grassroots organizations, neighbourhood groups and families are struggling to create alternate ways of living based on life giving values.

We affirm that the churches' place is on the side of the uprooted. We call on member churches through witness and service at all levels of the life of the churches to rediscover their identity as the Church of the Stranger.....

**THIS IS THE MOMENT TO CHOOSE TO BE
WITH UPROOTED PEOPLE**

(Provisional revision to Draft statement based on Central Committee plenary discussion of Friday, September 15, 1995)

APPENDIX V

**MEMORANDUM AND RECOMMENDATIONS
ON THE APPLICATION OF SANCTIONS****Introduction**

In recent times the international community has often felt helpless in face of armed conflicts and wars. The cost of military force, in terms of lives and property is heavy. Sanctions are a valuable tool available to enforce international law and to bring about the peaceful resolution of disputes.

The applicability, effectiveness and impact of sanctions on the people have been a frequent topic of ecumenical discussion. In World Council of Churches Assemblies and Central Committee debates since 1968, but more particularly since 1991, the subject of sanctions has come up repeatedly in relation to the cases of South Africa, Southern Rhodesia, Iraq and the Former Yugoslavia. Some Christians have preferred the use of sanctions as a non-military option in situations of conflict. It is in this spirit of overcoming violence that this study has been undertaken at the request of the Central Committee during its meeting in Johannesburg (January 1994). It aims to help churches to understand the complexities surrounding sanctions and to offer criteria which might be applied to improve this instrument and limit its negative effects on powerless victims of conflicts.

Various measures have been classified as sanctions. Some have questionable legitimacy under international law, as shown later. They have been imposed both unilaterally and multilaterally by a government or group of governments. Some have had the authority of internationally recognized bodies, others have not.

The churches need to have a proper grasp of the term «international sanctions,» especially as it is understood in international law on the basis of Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter, in order to make informed judgments about the application of such measures.

Though the commonly understood aim of sanctions is to bring about a peaceful resolution of conflict and to enforce compliance with international law, they are by definition coercive. As such they have the potential also to polarize conflict, contribute to its escalation, or inflict unacceptable suffering on populations caught in the middle.

Sanctions tend not to distinguish between those responsible for perpetrating an unlawful act, and innocent victims of a situation over which they have no control. As they make judgments about sanctions, churches must have uppermost in their minds both the positive and the potentially negative impact of such measures on the powerless and the victims.

Sanctions are never a first resort for the international community. They must be seen as part of a range of interrelated options available to obtain the compliance of states with the requirements of international law and established humanitarian principles, and to resolve conflicts within and between states. First come efforts to find a solution through diplomatic means, including «quiet» diplomacy. Positive incentives need to be offered, to induce an offending state to correct its behaviour short of the application of coercive pressures. Beyond sanctions lies the power of the United Nations Security Council to authorize the use of «all necessary means» - including military force - to enforce compliance.

Even if early efforts fail to remedy a situation and a violation continues to the point where sanctions become necessary, the door must always be kept open for diplomacy and negotiated solution.

As noted at the outset, this study considers sanctions to be a valuable tool, when in responsible hands and used prudently. It recognizes, however, that present practice often fails to meet these criteria. Therefore at its conclusion, a set of criteria is listed for consideration, along with proposals to improve the effectiveness and applicability of this instrument and to reduce its potential for becoming yet another act of violence.

Sanctions in International Law and Practice

International legal experts concur in regarding sanctions as measures of enforcement in response to violations of international law. Sanctions contribute to setting the acceptable limits of conduct and seek to restore legality. Properly and consistently applied, they serve as a deterrent. In this understanding, the principal actors are sovereign states, subject to no direct superior authority.

Effective application of sanctions presupposes a degree of coherence on the international level, and an acceptance of the rule of international law.

Sanctions, as a term to describe measures taken by a state or group of states against another which has violated accepted norms and standards, is a comparatively new concept in the history of international law. Sanctions have been imposed only rarely by competent international bodies, and the cases where they have been effective in gaining compliance by an offending state are even rarer.

The notion of sanctions has nonetheless become increasingly commonplace in contemporary international politics. Sanctions are generally understood as a way to describe concerted international action by non-military means against a state which is in violation of international law.

Sanctions have been seen by some as a *non-violent* means to correct systematic violations of human rights or to stop acts of aggression. Yet, powerful states have at times sought to justify aggressive, and sometimes very violent actions against another state with the official aura of sanctions to which some international body has given approval.

Sanctions may take many forms. In order to avoid misunderstandings, this study has considered especially those forms – economic, communications and diplomatic – foreseen in Art. 41 of the United Nations Charter.

The last of these, diplomatic sanctions, has a long tradition in the history of international relations. They include the recognition or non-recognition of another sovereign state, or the suspension of such diplomatic relations as a means of expressing displeasure with the behaviour of the other. Diplomatic measures may include a strong inducement for a state to correct its behaviour through the offer of recognition or the extension of greater privileges.

Attention is concentrated here, however, on economic sanctions, those most frequently proposed and disputed in present practice. Economic sanctions are generally taken to include such things as restrictions on international travel and communication; trade, commerce, foreign investment, and other areas of finance; restrictions on access to certain goods, like arms and strategic materials; and cultural exchange. Diplomatic sanctions themselves also frequently have an economic effect.

The Evolution of Sanctions in International Law

The League of Nations foresaw collective measures to be taken against member states who violated their obligations under the Covenant. In fact, the short-lived League only applied sanctions once, in the classic case of Ethiopia, and then without effect.

This concept was carried forward nevertheless to the United Nations Charter, though the word «sanctions» is not used there. In fact, the International Law Commission has dismissed the term as a legal category, preferring to discuss such actions under the heading «countermeasures...legitimate under international law.» «Measures» in the clear sense of sanctions are, however, described in Chapter VII of the UN Charter, and in the Statutes of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the Rules of the Bretton Woods Agreement.

The Charter continues to give sovereign states the limited right to act unilaterally in self-defense in case of armed attack. Clear priority is given, however, to collective decision-making and provision is made only for collective action to correct violations of international law or infringements of accepted international norms and standards of behavior. Acts of retaliation are in any case forbidden.

Economic sanctions by one state in order to gain advantage over another are expressly forbidden in the Declaration of Principles of International Law Concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation Among States, adopted by the General Assembly (res. 2625, XXV).

The Application of Sanctions

Even when appropriately applied under the authority of the UN Charter, sanctions have not always been consistent, impartial or effective. Decisions to apply multilateral sanctions have often been hotly disputed. Interpretations of universal norms vary widely. Permanent members of the Security Council have regularly used or threatened to use their veto power to shield friends or allies from the application of mandatory sanctions.

The absence of a clear, consistent, and effective system of enforcement by the UN further complicates the picture. This, and the ambiguity of international law, has allowed individual governments to use the term sanctions to provide a cloak of moral and legal justification for some of their own foreign policy

initiatives. Especially since 1990, powerful states have sought UN endorsement of their intention to apply what they have termed sanctions. This practice requires careful scrutiny by the churches and by the international community.

In practice, the Security Council has seldom decided to apply sanctions against states. It has, however, frequently condemned illegal behaviour, or acts of states which threaten international peace and security. Other individual member states or coalitions have frequently used such condemnations as moral justification for unilateral retaliatory actions, claiming to be operating within the framework of international law in defense of universal values, and not just in their own self-interest. The implications are far-reaching. A trend may emerge where a simple, but not prescriptive majority vote in the Security Council, irrespective of veto, may be taken to legitimize the behaviour of those states who are in the majority, and to disregard significant dissenting powers. This trend could have serious negative consequences for the credibility and viability of the UN as the principal protector of international law. It also puts into serious question the credibility, moral authority and legitimacy of the Security Council in its present structure and composition.

Another set of problems related to sanctions arises because only inadequate standards exist to determine what measures are appropriate in response to a given offense. Governments, therefore, have been left with a wide range of options. Sanctions, particularly economic ones, are usually put forward as the preferred non-military alternative.

The legality and propriety of non-military sanctions has also been the subject of controversy. It has been the contention, especially of many developing country governments, that all forms of economic coercion are proscribed under the terms of the UN Charter [Art 2 (4)] as acts of illegitimate force against the territorial integrity and political independence of a sovereign state. Many of these countries see sanctions as a tool of the North to continue its domination and exploitation of the South.

Questions are also raised about whether economic sanctions are the most efficient form of concerted action. It has proven virtually impossible to gain universal compliance with their application. Concerns have also been voiced about their indiscriminate effects on the civilian population and on third parties. It has been argued that such sanctions are a form of economic violence against whole peoples. Further doubts have been expressed about the slow and often limited results which can be obtained through economic sanctions, and their cost

not only to the offending state and its population, but also to states obliged to apply them.

Sanctions have been seen primarily as an instrument to be used to address international disputes. Their use in cases of civil wars, for example to block the flow of arms to warring parties, has been severely restricted by appeals to the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of sovereign states. Some of the most serious threats to international peace and security are, however, posed by precisely such conflicts, although they have not been addressed as such by the Security Council. A review of the application of sanctions needs to take this into account, and guidelines need to be developed to allow for more concerted international action to resolve internal disputes.

The Christian Faith and Sanctions

The Christian case for sanctions as an instrument of diplomacy must ultimately be based upon a theology of just peace and a clearly articulated set of ethical criteria, as well as on firmly established norms of international law.

The moral appeal of economic sanctions is that they purportedly offer non-violent alternatives to warfare in situations of manifest injustice. That appeal, however, must be tested in any specific case by prudential questions as to whether sanctions themselves may result in violence and further injustice, and also by questions as to whether there may be irenic alternatives to sanctions.

Just Peacemaking, Coercion and Reconciliation: Theological Foundations

The vision of a world of justice and peace is central to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. While the perfecting of a just peace is beyond the possibility of human achievement, it is within the power of the Sovereign God of Love who has created one whole, indivisible human family in a covenant of peace. Before our Sovereign God, the nations rise and fall; but the promise of *shalom*, of love binding peace with justice, is eternal.

Every member of God's family bears God's sacred image and is entitled to an abundant life of freedom, security and well-being. To be so endowed is to enjoy God-given dignity from which flow principles of human rights which it is the

responsibility of all persons and governments to respect and protect. The ultimate justification of sanctions must be such a concept of justice for the sake of authentic peace and security.

God has set our common life in human communities which have in turn established institutions necessary to govern them. Governments are responsible not only for justice and peace within their borders, and for security against aggression. They are rightly called to policies of initiative and cooperation in the quest for a just peace among all nations. The indivisibility of political liberty, common security, civil equity, economic welfare, and ecological integrity requires effective instruments of global governance and transnational action. Such instruments must promote the development of peoples, the resolution of conflicts, and the overcoming of violence.

Christian imperatives of justice and peace are especially grounded in the prophetic heritage of the scriptures and the ministry of reconciliation in Jesus Christ.

The policies and actions of all human institutions, including government, must be judged according to their impact upon the innocent, the poor, the weak and the oppressed; not only within domestic societies, but within any other society affected by these policies and actions. Coercive concepts of justice, as in the imposition of sanctions, risk becoming policies of injustice and cruelty if they compound the sufferings of the disinherited.

Under the sovereignty of God, no nation or group of nations is entitled to prosecute vengeance against another. Nor is any nation entitled to make unilateral judgments and take unilateral actions that lead to the devastation of another nation and the massive suffering and impoverishment of its people. Whenever aggression or massive and flagrant abuses of human rights by one nation call for preventive or punitive action under international law, a concerted multilateral response authorized by the United Nations or other competent international body is most likely to meet the requirements of just peacemaking, especially if that response is faithful to the integrity of carefully articulated ends and means.

While Christian churches and individual Christians have long differed with regard to the ethics of military action, our commitment to peacemaking has shared a common presumption against the resort to violence. For some Christians, that presumption may be overridden by the imperatives of justice when nonviolent strategies appear unavailing.

Sanctions have typically been regarded by churches as peaceful and nonviolent alternatives to war. But experience has revealed that sanctions, in some instances, may contribute to violence, widespread suffering, and the escalation of conflict. Thus sanctions must be understood as a morally mixed and ambiguous strategy. They may gain legitimacy when more conciliatory approaches to injustice have failed, but when military action seems premature or inappropriate. At best, sanctions may not inflict physical violence. Their very effectiveness, however, depends upon either their coercive force or the offer of compelling alternatives. The coercive consequences of sanctions typically involve suffering among at least some segments of the object nation. Sanctions may thus become implicated in the spectrum of violence and must not be sanctified with the name of nonviolence.

Just peacemaking, for Christians, must always be shaped by our commitment to the ministry and message of reconciliation. The Gospel's promise of reconciliation is based on God's first-loving initiative in Jesus Christ, who is our peace, breaking down the dividing walls of hostility, loving even our enemies, and making us one new humanity. Such a faith will not move to any coercive policy, whether economic or military, before seeking positive incentives to peacemaking among aggrieved adversaries. Any resort to a coercive strategy must aim at the reconstruction of peaceable and humane relationships, take great care to avoid or minimize suffering of the general populace or any innocent groups, and avoid causing more harm than good.

Nations facing decisions on either military or economic sanctions must always recollect the possibilities of their own complicity in the injustices of other nations they now seek to overcome. The moral burdens of history, if forgotten or neglected, may be deprived of their due weight and their chastening power on nations self-righteously about to launch punitive attacks on their partners in iniquity. The recollection of such moral burdens does not necessarily imply a prohibition on just action in the present; it does serve to enhance the possibilities of humility and humanity in the conduct of sanctions and the quest for irenic alternatives. Repentance in most human conflicts, be they personal, social or international, is a precondition of reconciliation.

Criteria for Determining the Applicability and Effectiveness of Sanctions

The Central Committee of the World Council of Churches, meeting in Geneva, September 1995,

- basing itself on the churches' experience with the impact of the imposition of economic sanctions, and on a preliminary study of several dimensions of sanctions as an instrument to restore respect for international law, to redress gross and systematic violations of accepted international standards of conduct, and to promote peace through non-military means;
- and in the context of the Council's Program to Overcome Violence;

receives and commends the background document accompanying this statement to the churches;

aware that sanctions are by definition coercive and that they often inflict additional suffering on affected populations, particularly the most innocent, for example, children;

conscious of the need for churches to consult one another in times of crisis, especially when measures like sanctions are being considered which will impact the people of their country;

convinced that sanctions should only be applied after all other less coercive measures have been exhausted; and

adopts the following criteria by which churches may judge the legitimacy of imposing sanctions, assess their effectiveness, and ensure humanitarian care for those affected by sanctions applied against a state whose policies they may neither share nor be able to change:

Decision-making Criteria

1. **Irenic measures.** Sanctions must be regarded as *part of a broader strategy of peacemaking*, and as an alternative to warfare. They should be imposed only after less coercive diplomatic measures have been taken to remedy the situation.

Churches may play an irenic role not only as advocates for irenic government policies, but as direct actors in offering inquiry, mediation or conciliation. Where possible, positive incentives or inducements should be offered as a preferable means of avoiding the escalation of conflicts.

2. **Flagrant and persistent violations.** Sanctions should be adopted only in *circumstances of flagrant and persistent violations* of international law and accepted international norms and standards.
3. **Clear and limited purpose.** Sanctions should have a *clearly defined purpose*, and explicit criteria should be given for determining the conditions under which that purpose will be seen to be achieved, and the sanctions lifted.

Sanctions *may not have a punitive purpose beyond compliance*, nor may they be used for self-aggrandizement, or applied to further the economic, ideological, political, military or other narrow national self-interest of a state or group of states.

4. **Competent multilateral authority.** Sanctions find their greatest legitimacy and moral authority when authorized by a *competent multilateral body*, especially the United Nations Security Council, authorized by the United Nations Charter to impose such measures.

The churches should seek to ensure that the Security Council or any other multilateral body functions justly and is so structured as to *judge violations impartially, consistently, openly and in consultation* with the alleged offending government.

5. **Proportionality.** *The good achieved by sanctions must not be exceeded by the harm that can reasonably be anticipated.* Care should be taken to design measures which will limit suffering of persons affected by sanctions within a country whose policies they may be powerless to change.
6. **Political efficacy.** Sanctions aim to effect political change through economic pressure. For them to be effective, there must be a determination that there is a *reasonable prospect that their stated purposes are achievable* by this means.
7. **Enforceability.** Sanctions are effective only to the extent that they are *consistently and thoroughly applied*. This depends on the capacity of the authorizing body to enforce them and on the mobilization of sufficient political will among member states to apply them universally.

Operational Criteria

8. **Humanitarian Conduct.** Sanctions should be directed as precisely as possible to those political, military and economic bodies and their leaders most responsible for the violation.

Humanitarian assistance should be made available to a country to which sanctions are being applied so that such essential items as food, water and medicine are not denied to the general population.

Churches are often well-placed to assess whether these aims are being achieved.

9. **Authoritative Monitors.** The progress and the effects of sanctions should be continually assessed by an independent and impartial multilateral monitoring body so that compliance with aims of the sanctions can be measured, the harmful impact on the population evaluated, and the sanctions terminated in a timely manner.

Churches and other non-governmental organizations have a vital and distinctive role to play in this monitoring.

10. **Compensatory Justice.** The enforcing powers should be prepared during and following sanctions to attend to the hurts and meet the needs of victims within the object nation, as well as in those nations which suffer collateral damage as a result of the application of the sanctions.

11. **Open Communication.** Governments and international authorities applying sanctions should maintain open communication with both government leaders and civic groups within the object nation as a means to:

- avoid the danger of provoking sentiments of abandonment and isolation in the object nation which could serve to intensify the conflict and frustrate the aims of sanctions;
- keep open the possibility of dialogue with political and other leaders in pursuit of a diplomatic negotiated solution;
- assure open access to competent humanitarian bodies, including those of the churches, to allow them to minister to the needs of those who suffer needlessly as a result of the sanctions.

APPENDIX VI

MEMORANDUM AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE OCCASION OF THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNITED NATIONS

During the Fortieth Anniversary Year of the United Nations, the Central Committee (Buenos Aires 1985) recalled

...the noble ideals embodied in the Charter and the enthusiasm and excitement which accompanied its adoption. We also recall that the tragedy of World War II...served as the catalyst for the creation of this institution. It was an expression of commitment by the founding nations to exercise their political will and pool all their collective wisdom and resources for the maintenance of peace and international security.

Unfortunately, forty years later, the world is witnessing a crisis of confidence in international institutions, a growing breakdown in multilateralism and a gradual erosion in the authority of the UN. This threatens to sweep away the foundations of world peace and a stable international order...

...The disturbing trends which are ripping apart the fragile but essential fabric of international cooperation pose tremendous challenges to the ecumenical community as it seeks to witness as God's faithful agent for the healing of the broken relationships between the community of nations.

Four years later, in 1989, the Berlin Wall collapsed, signalling the end of Communist rule in Central and Eastern Europe. The end of the Cold War confrontation, which had immobilized the UN for decades, opened the way for the realization of the vision incorporated in the UN Charter of a just, peaceful world order. The permanent members of the Security Council began to put their shoulders to the same wheel and to use the instruments made available to the Council in the Charter but never before used because of the sharp confrontation

of ideologies and the repeated use of the power of veto. In rapid succession, a series of nagging, terribly destructive conflicts were resolved in Afghanistan, Cambodia, Angola, Namibia, El Salvador. The apartheid regime in South Africa also gave way under concerted international pressure, and tensions were reduced throughout North East and South East Asia.

But the cooperative approach of the major powers to conflict resolution was short lived. The proclamation of yet another «New World Order» did not lead to a rejuvenation of the United Nations, but rather to a period of system-wide confusion which many commentators have referred to as the «New World Disorder.»

The New World Dis-Order

A number of interrelated factors contributed to this state of affairs.

One was the heavy-handed behaviour of some members of the Security Council. In 1990, asserting its role as the «world's only remaining super-power,» the United States of America pressed upon the Security Council its plan for military action to counter Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, short-cutting the UN's effort to obtain a withdrawal through the strict application of international sanctions against the offending power.

In its statement on the Gulf War, the Seventh Assembly (Canberra 1991) pointed to the wider implications of that move:

The question of how major international decisions are made has become one of pressing urgency in the world today. The lessons learned from the way this first major world crisis in the post-Cold War era has been handled by the international community demand a critical examination of the emerging new world order. No one government or group of governments should either take or be allowed to take primary responsibility for the resolution of major conflicts beyond their own borders.

A second was the use of UN peace-keeping forces as a panacea for conflict. The Secretary-General's promising «Agenda for Peace» became bogged down in a series of ill-conceived deployments of UN forces in places like Somalia. Often lacking clarity of purpose, UN peace-keeping operations proliferated. As often as not, they further complicated conflicts rather than to bring them closer to resolution. The «Blue Helmets» were more and more regarded as partisan forces, and not the neutral peace-keepers they were intended to be. Peace-keeping and peace-enforcement became confused. In addition, the sky-rocketing

costs associated with these initiatives placed the whole organization at financial risk.

Third, the ideology of the unrestricted «free market» was pressed upon the component parts of the world body as litmus test for survival in the process of reorganization. The UN's development agenda floundered as more and more responsibility for global economic and trade reform was ceded to the Bretton Woods institutions: the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

Fourth, a simplistic approach to democratization around the world also overtook the organization. To hold elections became the *sine qua non* for economic and political recognition, and was equated with popular democratic rule in many places, ignoring the historical and cultural context of peoples, and leaving untouched the political and economic root causes of injustice, division and conflict.

Fifth, the capacity of the UN to respond to complex emergencies has been severely impaired. Individual UN agencies continue to do heroic work in the field to protect refugees, to meet the human needs of masses of persons displaced by conflict and natural disaster, to protect children, to cope with threats of epidemics, and to feed and house threatened populations. The emergence of many new civil and international conflicts, often exacerbated by ethnic or national tensions, has severely strained the capacity of the Organization to coordinate and oversee emergency operations. The creation of a new Department of Humanitarian Affairs has helped, but the extraordinary circumstances of crises like the one in Rwanda have served to underscore the need for a thorough review of emergency response.

The crux of the problem remains, in the view of many experts, the increasing concentration of power in the Security Council, and in particular in the hands of its five permanent members. Decisions were more often reached behind closed doors, stifling debate, overwhelming the General Assembly and its subsidiary organs, and increasingly alienating the vast majority of nations from the full exercise of their responsibility for international decision-making. As a consequence, the agenda, functioning and internal coordination of the United Nations system has become increasingly confused and incoherent.

Pressure is on again for a reform of UN structures, beginning with the composition, procedures and role of the Security Council. Once again, however, the proposals for change tend to respond more to the interests of a minority of powerful

industrialized nations than to the ever more pressing needs of the poorest of the world's nations.

Thus, while the crisis of confidence in the United Nations to which the Central Committee referred in its statement a decade ago has changed in character, it persists and grows, especially in the «South». The global hope for change which burst out in 1989 has given way to widespread disillusionment. The crisis in multilateralism continues, almost unabated, further widening and deepening the chasm between rich and poor nations, and virtually abandoning the least developed countries, the vast majority of which are in Africa.

The WCC's Commitment to the United Nations.

All this considered, however, the affirmation of the WCC Church and Society Conference in 1966 remains valid:

The UN is the best structure now available through which to pursue the goals of international peace and justice. Like all institutions it is not sacrosanct and many changes are necessary (for it) to meet the needs of the world today. Nevertheless we call upon the churches of the world to defend it against all attacks which would weaken or destroy it and to seek out and advocate ways in which it can be transformed into an instrument fully capable of ensuring the peace and guaranteeing justice on a world-wide scale.

This commitment to the United Nations has its roots deep in the history of the ecumenical movement which has long advocated the shaping of global institutions capable of achieving the aims set out in the Preamble to the Charter:

- to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war..., and
- to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small, and
- to establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law can be maintained, and
- to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom...
- to practice tolerance and live together in peace, with one another as good neighbours, and
- to unite our strength to maintain international peace and security, and

to ensure by the acceptance of principles and the institution of methods, that armed force shall not be used, save in the common interest, and to employ international machinery for the promotion of the economic and social advancement of all peoples.

The story of that commitment is worth recalling. International church leaders gathered in Geneva in August 1920 to work through the implications of the First World War for humankind and for Christianity, and to prepare the Universal Christian Conference on Life and Work held in Stockholm in 1925, which they hoped would contribute to the avoidance of another such catastrophe. That Stockholm Conference and the 1937 Oxford Conference on Church, Community and State called to further develop its ideas laid the foundations for modern ecumenical social thought in a range of areas, including the future of world order.

Preparing for Peace in the Midst of War.

In the spirit of Oxford, the Federal Council of Churches in the United States of America instituted a «Commission to Study the Bases of a Just and Durable Peace.» Drawing upon work of the Provisional Committee of the World Council of Churches, that Commission drew up a list of principles, almost all of which were incorporated into the draft UN Charter drawn up in 1944 at Dumbarton Oaks in Washington, D.C. That draft, however, still fell short of the churches' expectations, and an additional list of Christian expectations for the Charter was elaborated which called for:

1. The addition of a Preamble to the Charter which would «reaffirm those present and long range purposes of justice and human welfare...which reflect the aspirations of peoples everywhere.»
2. The further development and codification of international law, «to the end that there shall be a progressive subordination of force to law.»
4. The establishment of a special Commission to further the «progress of colonial and dependent peoples to autonomy...»
5. The establishment of a special Commission on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms which would, *inter alia*, develop and implement guarantees for religious freedom.
6. Universal membership of the new Organization.
7. Specific provisions for the limitation and reduction of armaments.
8. Provisions to protect smaller nations from the exercise of arbitrary power by the great.

9. Liberalized provision for amendments to the Charter which would not require the concurrence of the Permanent Members of the Security Council.

Three US church leaders active in the World Council of Churches (in process of formation) attended the 1945 United Nations Conference on International Organization in San Francisco where they pressed successfully for the inclusion of virtually all of these points in the Charter, including the Preamble itself.

Commentators at the time credited the international Christian influence with having played a decisive role, especially in gaining the inclusion in the Charter of the more extensive provisions for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

In the words of one prominent government representative to the San Francisco Conference, they

... exerted a profound influence upon the form and character which the world organization would take. As originally projected at Dumbarton Oaks, the organization was primarily a political device whereby the so-called great powers were to rule the world...

It was the religious people who took the lead in seeking that the organization should be dedicated not merely to a peaceful but to a just order. It was they who sought that reliance should be placed upon the moral forces which could be reflected in the General Assembly, the Social and Economic Council, and the Trusteeship Council rather upon the power of a few militarily strong nations operating in the Security Council without commitment to any standards of law and justice.

The ecumenical observers were also influential in gaining the inclusion in the Charter of Article 71, which provides for «suitable arrangements for consultation with non-governmental organizations» with the Economic and Social Council. The Commission of the Churches on International Affairs, created in 1946, in part to play this role on behalf of the WCC, was among the first to be granted such official NGO status.

Subsequently, the CCLA was influential in the drafting of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, particularly with respect to its provisions on religious freedom, and in the formation of the UN Commission on Human Rights.

Over the past five decades, the WCC as a whole has worked at the United Nations and with its Specialized Agencies on a wide ranging agenda which has included:

decolonization, human rights, the struggle against racism and apartheid, the status of women, economic and social development, the rights of the child, world food policy, the rights of migrants and refugees, basic health care delivery, standards governing the activities of transnational corporations, education and literacy, election monitoring, environmental protection, human settlements, population, and response to humanitarian emergencies.

It has also been a respected participant in a wide range of international NGO coordinating committees and organizations, including the Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations, of which the CCIA was a founder-member.

The World Council of Churches does not, therefore, critique the United Nations as either a newcomer or disinterested observer. Rather, it raises questions out of an intimate knowledge of the Organization, as a participant, and as a body committed to the goals and principles established in the Charter.

Facing up to new challenges

As noted earlier, the need for UN reform is widely recognized. As it stands, the UN is neither democratic, transparent or fair. The competition among related agencies for funding, recognition and influence impairs effective action, and contributes to proliferation of sometimes overlapping bureaucracies and to the fragmentation of the global agenda.

The problem does not reside solely on the side of the UN. Among non-governmental organizations there are also major difficulties. Partly out of frustration with the incapacity, or unwillingness, of governments and intergovernmental organizations to deal effectively with the «peoples' agenda,» there has been a burgeoning of civil society organizations at local, national, regional and international levels. While this proliferation is a positive development, efforts to coordinate effective NGO pressure on the UN system run up against what often seem to be almost insuperable obstacles.

Sometimes, it is NGOs who are at the root of problems. A case in point is the competition among private voluntary humanitarian relief agencies. Again, Rwanda is a case in point. There, the massive involvement of hundreds of voluntary agencies, some of them with more personnel and funds than the government itself, makes effective coordination virtually impossible. Many look to the UN for that coordination, but even with the best will (which is not always the case) it too often has inadequate staff, finances and logistic support to play this role effectively.

The global crisis in confidence in the UN often tends in the direction of self-fulfilling prophecy. Critical funder-nations use the criticism to justify withholding funds owed to the UN, or to cut their allocations, further impairing the capacity of the system to respond. Critical popular movements seek ways around the system in efforts to respond directly to peoples' needs and the peoples' agendas. The nations of the «South,» frustrated by the apparent inability of the UN to address their fundamental needs, are either driven into reliance on bi-lateral relationships which increase their «neocolonial» dependency, or are rendered defenceless against demands by bodies like the IMF and the World Bank to «restructure» their economies in ways which weaken their capacity to respond to urgent social requirements of their people.

There has been a proliferation of UN World Conferences during the period of the fiftieth anniversary celebrations of the UN. The hope was that these would galvanize international public opinion and governments' policies behind concerted, more clearly defined international priorities. Many placed particular hopes in the Copenhagen Social Summit, which held out the promise of reordering the global social agenda. Undeniably, each of these great international gatherings was marked by specific achievements. But critics point out that they have tended more to divide governments along regional and «cultural» lines than to unify them behind clearly defined and mutually accepted objectives. «Civil society» organizations often consider themselves to have been marginalized from the policy-making process, and relegated to the role of mobilizing public opinion behind Conference conclusions which at times do not reflect a «peoples' agenda».

There is an understandable frustration with our collective incapacity to remedy problems long ago identified as the fundamental cause of conflict and human suffering. Partly as a result of the failure of the international community to deal with such long-standing problems as underdevelopment, the proliferation of nuclear and conventional armaments, discrimination against women and minorities, and the systematic violation of fundamental human rights, today's challenges have become complex to the extent that they defy both imagination and action.

Considerations for WCC work with the UN System

A recent thorough review of WCC relationships with the UN system and associated NGO bodies shows an unusually broad involvement. It has also revealed that there is insufficient coherence and coordination within the Council

itself, and with member churches and related ecumenical bodies. Steps are being taken to improve this, and to develop a more focused approach to WCC-UN relations. Among the conclusions reached have been the following:

1. The WCC has its own agenda. We must be attentive to UN and other international developments in setting that agenda, but then develop relationships with the UN system in a way which responds to our own priorities in a way which guards against being diverted from them or coopted by others.
2. A part of that agenda is to promote effective instruments of global governance. It has, therefore, a responsibility to inform and encourage member churches and related movements in their efforts to improve the UN system and to make it more responsive to the needs of peoples. Here, the CCIA UN Headquarters Liaison Office has a special role to play.
3. The WCC should make effective use of those UN mechanisms to which it has access to pressure governments to comply with international norms and standards, such as those on human rights. In this process, the WCC should support and enable partners to represent their own interests in appropriate UN forums.
4. When special events, such as world conferences, can be expected to result in constructive new policies or commitments by governments and the international community that have a direct relationship to the ecumenical agenda, the WCC should use them as a stimulus to help the churches articulate their own analysis and recommendations. One goal is obviously to influence the international agenda. But another valid one is to use such occasions for capacity building of the churches and other partners, and building more effective relationships with others who share our goals. A commitment to engage in such a process requires a commitment to help shape the agenda of such events from the earliest stages of preparation.
5. The impact of the WCC on the UN agenda can often be maximised through select involvement with other non-governmental organizations and coordinating bodies.
6. There is the need for clear priority setting for ecumenical involvement with the UN. It cannot, nor should it pretend to relate to the whole range of issues addressed by the UN. It must relate selectively, in relationship to its own programme priorities. Experience shows that day-to-day cooperation with

selected specialized agencies and programme bodies are generally more effective than less focused involvements.

7. The WCC functions in relationship to the UN as a non-governmental organization through the CCIA's formal relationship with the Economic and Social Council and several Specialized Agencies, and through other relationships maintained by other programmes of the Council. Indeed, the WCC may well be the largest, and most representative, in geographical terms, of the international NGOs, and possibly one of those closest to local realities. This is a necessary role for the churches, and one often highly appreciated by partners in the UN.
8. The WCC should not, however, restrict its role vis-à-vis the UN to that of an NGO. It has a broader responsibility to the world of nations to give voice to ethical, moral and spiritual perspectives which must undergird international relations.
9. In general, WCC relations with the UN should be viewed in the light of how we might use the instruments it provides to achieve the ecumenical vision of a just and peaceful world. In this way, it becomes not an extra burden, but part of the total work of the Council.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Against this background, the following recommendations were proposed to the Central Committee, meeting in Geneva, 14-22 September 1995, for adoption:

The Central Committee:

1. *reaffirms* the dedication of the World Council of Churches to the principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Organization,
2. *reaffirms* the centrality of the United Nations in the conduct of international relations, the safeguarding the international rule of law, and the elaboration of norms and standards governing international behaviour for the benefit of the whole of humankind and the global environment;

3. *reiterates* its deep concern about trends in the UN as described in the accompanying Memorandum which have diverted it from aspirations expressed in the Preamble to the Charter, and thus erode public confidence;
4. *joins* with those calling for a UN reform which would assure full participation in effective decision-making by all member states, redressing the present situation which tends to relegate small, less powerful, and economically deprived nations to subsidiary roles in the formation and implementation of international policy;
5. *calls* for a comprehensive review, open to public scrutiny, of the structure and functioning of the Security Council, with regard especially to its domination by the present permanent members invested with veto powers;
6. *reaffirms* the role of the United Nations in peace-keeping, while urging a thorough reassessment of the role of peace-keeping forces, ensuring that their deployment is in strict compliance with the terms of the Charter which protect the rights of states, and strengthening the role of cooperation for peace as a means of identifying and addressing the causes of international and internal conflicts before they become violent;
7. *calls* upon the UN to reaffirm its commitment to the role of independent non-governmental organizations in the work of the Organization as a means to avail itself of expertise and information available through these bodies and to assure that the «peoples of the United Nations» and especially the victims of the present world disorder have an effective voice in shaping international policy and in guiding its implementation;
8. *appeals* once again to all member states to cooperate actively with the United Nations, and to keep faith with their commitments to the financing of the Organization;
9. *reiterates* its appeal to the churches to be alert to the activities and policies of their respective governments with a view to strengthening the capacity of the UN in areas such as the promotion and protection of human rights, the struggle against racism, the enhancement of the rights of women, aid to and protection of refugees and migrants, the effective international control of production and transfer of armaments, the elimination of nuclear weapons, protection of the global environment, and the realization of a just and equitable international economic order;

10. *reaffirms* the role of the Board on International Affairs (Commission of the Churches on International Affairs) in maintaining and coordinating contact with the United Nations and its Specialized Agencies as the principal expression of the WCC as a non-governmental organization, and encourages it to review the adequacy of its present consultative status in the light of changes in the nature of NGO relations with ECOSOC;
11. *recognizes and reaffirms* the role of Unit II through Churches' Action for Health (CMC) in relation to the World Health Organization, and through the programme on Education for All God's People on adult education and literacy with UNESCO; the contribution of Unit III to UN bodies in the field of racism, indigenous peoples, the status of women and youth, sustainable development and climate change; the cooperation of Unit IV with DHA (Department of Humanitarian Affairs), FAO, ILO, UNHCR and UNICEF; and the effective working relations of a wide range of Council programmes with intergovernmental and NGOs at international and regional levels;
12. *considers* that the relationship of the World Council of Churches with the UN and its Specialized Agencies should be guided by its vocation as a major world ecumenical body in dialogue with people of other faiths, giving expression to the moral, ethical and spiritual dimensions which need to be confronted along with the political and economic aspects of the current crisis in global governance. The WCC should not confine itself to the role it presently exercises through the CCIA or other Council programmes as a non-governmental organization; and
13. *encourages* the General Secretary, in his efforts to facilitate access of regional ecumenical bodies, national councils of churches and member churches to the United Nations, to be alert to opportunities for the Council and its member churches to exercise their influence in ways which could contribute to the shaping of a just, participatory and peaceful world order.

APPENDIX VII

GUIDELINES FOR RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN NATIONAL COUNCILS OF CHURCHES AND THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

Introduction

Since the early days of the World Council of Churches (WCC), and even before, National Councils of Churches (NCCs) have played a significant role in furthering ecumenical consciousness, fellowship and action.

There is considerable diversity among NCCs. Consequently, there is a diversity of relationships between NCCs and the WCC, but within this diversity there are some common features:

- (a) NCCs are autonomous bodies constituted by their member churches. Many have incorporated elements of the WCC basis into their constitutions.
- (b) The WCC has recognised many NCCs as either Associated Councils or Councils in Working Relationship. Some NCCs are also affiliated to the CWME. (Such relations need to be fostered). The question of relationship of NCCs to CWME should be referred to WCC Central Committee.

Guidelines

1. The NCCs share with the WCC and REOs (Regional Ecumenical Organisations) the following convictions:
 - (i) There is one ecumenical movement which is rooted in the life and mission of the churches and embraces not only the WCC, REOs and NCCs but also those who seek to work together towards visible unity «... so that the world may believe».
 - (ii) The ecumenical movement rejoices in the diversity of the churches at local, national, regional and global levels and seeks to celebrate and live

out the gift and calling of koinonia in the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit

- (iii) The churches, NCCs, REOs and WCC are called to enable the proclamation of the Kingdom of God through shared witness and service.

2. The WCC, REOs and NCCs affirm the following working principles for their co-operation:

- (i) the WCC, REOs and NCCs are partners in their common task of enabling member churches in all their diversity to work and to be together locally, nationally, regionally and globally;
- (ii) they acknowledge that the fundamental authority for their decisions and actions lies within their respective member churches;
- (iii) they seek to develop within their own life and in their partnership with one another an inclusive community which affirms the gifts of all, irrespective of gender, age, ability differences, race or ethnic origin;
- (iv) they are committed to sharing with others in seeking a common and credible witness and in working for justice, peace and the integrity of creation;
- (v) they seek to enable dialogue and co-operation with people of other faiths and facilitate mutual information about such work;

3. In seeking to foster mutual co-operation importance will be given, during the coming period, to:

- (i) enabling shared reflection, within the WCC, REOs and NCCs on the developing ecumenical partnerships between their member churches at local, national, regional and global levels;
- (ii) challenging the WCC, REOs and NCCs to bring to bear within their life and work the gifts and insights of Churches, Pentecostal and African Independent Churches) which are members of many NCCs but are not members of the WCC or REOs. In a parallel way, the gifts and insights of the WCC and REOs could be widely shared through NCCs, for the benefit of all;
- (iii) encouraging the search for a common vision of Christian unity, enabling a common proclamation of the Gospel, clarifying the ecclesial self-understanding of NCCs and defining their role, within their particular contexts, as servants and advocates of unity and renewal;
- (iv) enabling more effective ecumenical sharing of the resources and gifts of the churches, at all levels, with a view to developing appropriate patterns of self-reliance and partnerships;

- (v) providing opportunities for WCC member churches and those churches which are not in membership of the WCC to engage in common reflection and action on current priorities within the ecumenical movement;
 - (vi) developing procedures for the sharing of information, both between NCCs and between WCC, REOs and NCCs, making appropriate use of information technology;
 - (vii) offering mutual support, particularly in situations of conflict and oppression, through visits and exchanges and through prayer and education;
 - (viii) through sharing vision and conviction facilitating the initiative of member churches to set up NCCs in areas where they do not exist and encouraging the renewal of NCCs which have become ineffective.
4. The WCC, REOs and NCCs recognise that such mutual co-operation will require flexible and informal structures; these should be developed as appropriate, through the Advisory Group of the WCC Office on Church and Ecumenical Relations and the representative group named by the Third International Consultation for NCCs.

APPENDIX VIII

WCC UNIT IV SHARING AND SERVICE ECUMENICAL CHURCH LOAN FUND (ECLOF) 50TH ANNIVERSARY, APRIL 1996

1. In recognition of the Ecumenical Church Loan Fund (ECLOF) contribution to the ministry of the churches and promotion of socio-economic justice for economically marginalised groups that have no access to credit facilities, the Unit IV Committee requested the Central Committee to commend to the member churches and related bodies the following minute on the 50th Anniversary of the Ecumenical Church Loan Fund.

2. Lending and the Christian commitment

2.1 1996 marks the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the Ecumenical Church Loan Fund. In 1946, the churches in Europe needed this instrument to help with reconstruction of worship sanctuaries and other church infrastructure damaged in the war.

‘Money lending’ for many people evokes an activity which they see as incompatible with their Christian commitment and concern for sharing and giving. There are many situations however where parishes or other groups, given an appropriately designed credit programme, are able to meet the cost of financing their undertakings. In such cases, a loan is not likely to result in moral dependency. This was precisely the vision of the founders, mainly Genevan bankers and significantly a great ecumenist who would later become the first General Secretary of the World Council of Churches. Although the idea of small-scale loans and credit is now generally accepted, it was indeed a revolutionary idea at the time.

2.2 Although ECLOF started in Europe, through the influence of WCC, it spread its work to Asia in 1959 when it opened a National ECLOF

Committee in Myanmar (then Burma) and subsequently spread to Africa and Latin America/Caribbean.

- 2.3 Following the Uppsala Assembly in 1968 and challenge from WCC to respond to the increasing poverty, in addition to the existing General Capital mandate which was to support churches and church based institutions, the Development Capital mandate was initiated in 1971. This was to grant loans to foster human development in general, and in particular to promote socio-economic justice, self-reliance and alleviation of poverty without discrimination as to religion or political conviction. The implications this would entail for ECLOF both in Geneva and at the local level in terms of strategy, membership and organisation of the board and National ECLOF Committees were indeed profound. It became necessary to broaden the scope of the programme and make it more participatory and democratic and to provide for participation of like-minded community organisations as members of National ECLOF Committees in partnership with the churches. This has widened the network of relationships and strengthened institutional development.
- 2.4 Following the adoption by the WCC of the Resolution of the Churches in Solidarity with Women, ECLOF responded by changing guidelines to require at least 50% women membership in the National ECLOF Committees. This has resulted in the participation of many community based women organisations involved in the advocacy and promotion of women's socio-economic interests. There followed as well a marked expansion in provision of credit to women groups and a reorientation to funding family based microenterprises requiring as little as US\$ 100.

3. Growing interest in ECLOF's strategy

The many and radical changes over the last four years that defines clearly the ECLOF strategy for using credit to promote human dignity and sustainable community among socio-economically marginalised groups have raised considerable interest in the churches and the partner agencies. Unit IV Sharing and Service welcomes this as providing a natural partnership in fulfilling the Unit's mandates particularly as they relate to promoting practical actions of solidarity which reflect commitment to a more just sharing of resources amidst growing poverty, displacement and exclusion, locally and regionally.

4. ECLOF lending activities

- 4.1 Since it was founded, ECLOF has granted 5,019 loans, of which 3,448 loans have been repaid in full.

In 1994, 410 loans valued at US\$ 5,369,000 were granted compared to 342 loans valued at US\$ 3,769,000 in 1993. Of these, 152 loans valued at US\$ 1,761,000 granted in 1994 were to women's groups or programmes with at least 50% women participation in the benefits. This compared to 103 loans valued at US\$ 1,089,000 in 1993.

Of the 410 loans, 148 loans valued at US\$ 2,027,000 were to churches to support church buildings and other church community infrastructure. With an average loan of US\$ 13,000 in 1994, in many cases one loan covering several small loans, ECLOF continues to be a small-scale credit programme.

- 4.2 In 1994, 65% of the loans were disbursed directly by the National ECLOF Committees under devolution of authority granted by the board thus undergirding the significance of local autonomy and decision-making inbuilt in the ECLOF system.

5. Recognition of the past and a view of the present

- 5.1 It is with deep gratitude that we recognise the vision of the founders and the many courageous initiatives that have been taken over these last fifty years. We take this opportunity to pay tribute to the many men and women at international and local levels who brought into being and developed this particular credit instrument of the ecumenical family.

- 5.2 The fiftieth anniversary takes place at a critical moment when it has been recognised that established economic models have failed to sustain human development and criticism of models of aid and partnership is at its height. Persistent poverty that impacts women and children the most and inequitable distribution of resources make the challenge for the future even more urgent than before.

6. Affirmation and recommendation

- 6.1 The Unit IV Committee affirms:
- the achievements of ECLOF
 - the complementarity of loans and grants

- the importance of training as an integral part of credit and loan schemes
- the importance of loans in contributing to the promotion of human dignity and sustainable community, this is in connection with the Unit IV Four Year Plan.

6.2 The Unit IV Committee recommends to churches and ecumenical donor agencies:

- that serious consideration be given to the need to move in appropriate situations from grants to loans
- that lending capital resources are allocated to support the ECLOF credit programme in the context of the above point: complementarity of loans and grants.

APPENDIX IX

STRUCTURE REVIEW GROUP

AMENDMENTS TO THE RULES, REGULATIONS AND BY-LAWS OCCASIONED BY THE MOVE OF BOSSEY FROM UNIT I TO THE GENERAL SECRETARIAT

References to the «Constitution, Rules, Regulations & By-Laws» as revised in February 1994 following the decisions of the Central Committee in January 1994. Amendments underlined.

Section IV, paragraph 5.b

- b) reviews and evaluates the work of the areas of relationships, (including the work of the Joint Working Group), communication and the Ecumenical Institute, Bossey;

Section IV, paragraph 8

- 8. **BOARDS** The Central Committee may mandate and appoint Boards for specialised activities, which shall function as permanent or standing Working Groups, reporting through a Unit Commission or, in the case of the Ecumenical Institute, Bossey, through the Executive and General Secretariat Committees. Boards are expert groups set up by the Central Committee on the recommendation of a Unit Committee to have responsibility for certain specific programmes as set out in the Unit regulations and by-laws. (See V.5.d)

Section V, paragraph 10

10. **BOARDS**

Boards are set up as indicated in Rule (V.5.d) and paragraph IV.8 above. Their work is regulated in accordance with the by-laws for specialised activities set out in section VI below:

A. **Faith and Order** (Unit I)

B. **The Ecumenical Institute, Bossey** (General Secretariat)

C. **The Conference on World Mission and Evangelism** (Unit II)

D. **International Affairs (CCIA)** (Unit III)

F. **The Ecumenical Church Loan Fund (ECLOF)** (Unit IV)

Section VI.B

B. THE ECUMENICAL INSTITUTE, BOSSEY (General Secretariat)

1. STATUS

The Ecumenical Institute, Bossey, located at the Château de Bossey, Céligny, Switzerland, (hereafter called «the Institute») is a specialised activity of the Council located in the General Secretariat.

2. AIM

It shall be the aim of the Institute to contribute to the formation of future generations of ecumenical leadership among both clergy and laity; to provide for ecumenical theological encounter in an inter-cultural and inter-confessional setting and to build a community in which ecumenical experience and different kinds of spirituality are being shared and ecumenical understanding nurtured.

3. FUNCTIONS

In pursuing its aim the Institute shall:

- 3.1 Conduct a Graduate School of Ecumenical Studies as a period of graduate academic studies, worship, community life and work for students from various countries and churches;
- 3.2 Organise courses and consultations;
- 3.3 Co-operate with ecumenical partner institutions and centres in activities of ecumenical education and research;
- 3.4 Engage in extension work;
- 3.5 Sponsor an ecumenical venue and facilities for meetings and conferences.

4. ORGANISATION

- 4.1 The Institute shall have a programme section and a guest house section, both serving the basic aim as stated in paragraph 2 above.
- 4.2 The programme section comprises all programme activities which are sponsored or co-sponsored by the Institute, including in particular the annual Graduate School and the various courses and consultations.
- 4.3 The guest house section comprises all activities related to the management of the Institute as a meeting centre and guest house.

5. BOARD

- 5.1 The activities of the Institute shall be governed by a Board, which shall be responsible to the Central Committee through the General Secretariat Committee.
- 5.2 The Board shall comprise not more than 15 members, including the Moderator. The Moderator and members of the Board shall be appointed by the Central Committee and shall serve until the next Assembly. The membership shall include one person nominated by the University of Geneva (see 7.2 below), the Deputy General Secretary (Programmes) and others with experience in academic teaching, ecumenical education, lay training and institutional finance and administration.
- 5.3 The Board shall elect a Vice-Moderator from within its number.
- 5.4 The Board shall be responsible for the work of the Institute within the framework of the Constitution and Rules of the Council and the Regulations of the General Secretariat. In particular it shall:
 - a) determine the annual programme of the Institute, including the theme and structure of the Graduate School and subjects for its courses and consultations;
 - b) advise the Director with regard to all aspects of the implementation of the aim and functions of the Institute;
 - c) receive the annual report of the Director;
 - d) formulate the business policy for the management of the Institute as a meeting centre and guest house and to supervise its implementation;
 - e) receive reports on the budget and funding of the Institute and provide oversight of the detailed planning and policy in relation to the funding of programmatic and guest house activities within the overall policies and budget of the Unit approved by the Central Committee.
 - f) assist in developing the financial resources available for the work of the Institute.
- 5.5 The Board shall normally meet once a year. Meetings shall be called by the Moderator. A special meeting may be called if it is requested by at least 6 members or by the Executive Committee of the Council for specific reasons.
- 5.6 The Officers of the Board shall be the Moderator, Vice-Moderator and the Deputy General Secretary (Programmes) and they may act in consultation with the Director on behalf of the Board in respect of urgent or routine matters and business referred to them by the Board. They

must report their actions to the next meeting of the Board for approval. The Director shall act as secretary of the Board.

- 5.7 The Board may also from time to time appoint sub-committees for specifically stated purposes.
- 5.8 The Board shall report to each meeting of the General Secretariat Committee through the Executive Committee.

6. DIRECTOR AND STAFF

- 6.1 The staff of the Institute shall be the members of the staff of the General Secretariat who are assigned to the work of the Institute.
- 6.2 The staff will be appointed in accordance with the normal procedure for the appointment of Council staff, but the General Secretary will consult with the Officers of the Institute regarding the appointment of the Director and executive members of the Institute staff by the Central Committee or the Executive Committee of the Council.
- 6.3 The Director shall have overall responsibility for the Institute. The Director is responsible to the Board and the Deputy General Secretary (Programmes).
- 6.4 An Administrator may be appointed, on the recommendation of the Board, who will have responsibility for the operation of the guest house.

7. PARTNERS

- 7.1 The Institute is related to the University of Geneva by a special agreement.
- 7.2 In pursuing its aims and functions the Institute may enter into agreements of partnership with academic institutions, ecumenical bodies and conference or educational centres. The Institute is represented in such agreements through the Board unless otherwise determined.

8. FINANCES

- 8.1 The financing of the work of Institute will be undertaken in the normal way as part of the work of the General Secretariat. The Director will therefore be responsible for working with the Assistant General Secretary, Finance & Administration and the Finance Officer of the General Secretariat in preparing a budget for the activities of the Institute, which will then be submitted as part of the General Secretariat budget to the Finance Committee and the Central Committee.
- 8.2 The Board will receive reports on the budget and funding of the work of the Institute and will provide oversight of the detailed planning and

policy in relation to the funding of programmatic and guest house activities of the Institute within the overall policies and budget of the General Secretariat approved by the Central Committee.

- 8.3 The Board should assist in developing the financial resources available for the work of the Institute.

9. AMENDMENTS

These by-laws may be amended by the Central Committee on the recommendation of, or in consultation with the Board and the Executive and General Secretariat Committees. Any proposed amendment must be circulated in writing to the members of the Board not less than three calendar months before the meeting of the Board at which it is to be considered.

APPENDIX X

DRAFT PAPER ON THE MEANING OF MEMBERSHIP

(Revised)

Preamble

Scripture very clearly affirms the oneness of Christ's Church (John 17, Eph. 4). Such an affirmation requires that the various churches should not remain in isolation but should seek to be in relationship with one another. The Rules of the WCC speak of the «*essential interdependence of the churches*» (Rule I.3.c). For the future of the ecumenical movement it has become imperative to spell out what the significance is of the multiple relationships that bind the churches together within the ecumenical movement in general, and within the WCC in particular.

This paper reflects the meaning of WCC membership as it is presently understood. Its substance will be incorporated in the Common Understanding and Vision process which may eventually lead to a more adequate expression of the same.

«The World Council of Churches is a fellowship of churches which confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the scriptures and therefore seek to fulfil together their common calling to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit».

1. The WCC is a *fellowship of churches* of differing traditions and confessions (cf. the Basis). To accept the Basis is not only to confess the central elements of Christian faith as expressed in it; it is to do so *together* with other churches and thereby to affirm that this common confession constitutes the members into a fellowship which is an expression of the biblical concept of *koinonia* and the metaphor of the human body used by St. Paul (I Cor. 12). As a global body, the nature of the community is one that transcends the barriers of nations, cultures and regions. The global dimension of the WCC is at once a treasure and a challenge. At a time when many local communities experience the need to affirm their particularities it is necessary

for the churches to appropriate anew for themselves the fundamental dimension of their identity as members belonging to one global fellowship.

2. The WCC embraces a wide representation of different Christian traditions. It is at present the most adequate and *«privileged»* instrument to manifest and safeguard the wholeness of the ecumenical movement. Because of this the quality of the fellowship embodied by the WCC is of supreme importance.
3. The fellowship of the WCC seeks to be an *inclusive community*. It affirms the dignity and equality of all God's people, irrespective of gender, age, race, social status or any other criteria dividing the human community. Each church is called to live this out in its own social context, as well as in relationship with other churches.
4. To belong to the WCC means sharing with other churches a *common ecumenical vision* and putting it into practice within the life and witness of each church, in the first place within its own local situation. The ecumenical vision that holds the fellowship together is based on that unity in Christ that is both gift and promise. It is expressed in the commitment by the members to make that unity visible. It is a dynamic vision that is constantly being reshaped as the churches grow together towards the fullness that is in Christ. This requires the readiness to be renewed by the action of the Spirit in encounter with other churches. Through such renewal the churches are enabled to implement this common vision in their local context.
5. To join the fellowship of the WCC means giving tangible expression to the *universality and catholicity* of the church. Member churches experience the discovery of this common identity as a gain. There is however no requirement for any church to give up its own identity but rather to share it with others and thereby to promote renewal and enrichment of all.
6. To be a member means entering the *wider ecumenical reality* of a fellowship that is more than the sum total of its constituent members. As the churches grow together they experience that deeper quality of fellowship which enables them to work together in common witness.
7. To be a member means, in the power of the Spirit, nurturing the ability of churches from differing backgrounds and traditions *to pray, live, act and*

grow together in community, at times through struggle and conflict. It implies the willingness and capacity to deal with disagreement through theological discussion, prayer and dialogue. The reality of cultural, social and religious plurality which characterize the world today calls the churches to live out and celebrate their oneness whilst recognizing the rich diversity of thought and practice.

8. To be part of the body means that within the fellowship there must be found a place for churches *to help one another to be faithful to the gospel, and to question one another* if any member is perceived to move away from the fundamentals of the faith or obedience to the gospel. Whilst member churches hold one another to be accountable to the gospel, the integrity of the fellowship is preserved through the exercise of responsibility for one another rather than by judgment and exclusion.
9. To be a member means participating in *ministries that extend beyond the boundaries and possibilities of any single church*. The fellowship enables the churches to speak and act on issues on which their individual voice and action would be not possible or less effective. Through the WCC, local churches can speak and act globally. Membership implies the readiness of the churches to link their specific local contexts with the global reality and allow that global reality to impact on their local situations.
10. To be a member means to be part of *a fellowship that has a voice of its own*. Through its governing bodies, the WCC may speak on behalf of the churches when requested to do so; it may speak to the churches calling them to action, prayer and reflection. The WCC has the freedom to go where not all the member churches may be able to go. The churches are also free not to identify themselves with the voice of the WCC. Yet they should give serious consideration to what the council says or does on behalf of the fellowship as a whole.
11. To be a member commits each church to seek *to implement the agreements* reached through the joint theological study and reflection of the total fellowship, within its own life and witness.
12. To be a member of the WCC means to participate in a *fellowship of sharing and solidarity*. The churches are called to support one another in their needs and struggles, and to celebrate together their joys and hopes. Sharing is expressed in spiritual support and informed intercession for each

other and financial assistance. It is a mutual process in which each church is acknowledged as both being able to give, and being in need to receive. Within the fellowship it is the gifts God has entrusted to the churches that count (I Cor. 12), not poverty and wealth or weakness and strength measured in material terms and numbers.

13. To be a member means understanding the mission of the church as a joint responsibility shared with others. The churches are called to accept the discipline of *common witness*. This implies that they do not engage in missionary or evangelistic activities in isolation from each other, much less in competition or proselytism of other Christian believers, especially in situations where they work within the same territorial boundaries.
14. To be a member means to enter into expressions of *common worship and prayer* with the other member churches. In this, the limitations imposed by specific traditions are fully respected, while concrete opportunities for shared worship and prayer are nurtured.
15. Each member church is expected *to take a full part* in the life and work of the Council and its programmes. This means ensuring that
 - a. they pray for the Council and for one another within the fellowship;
 - b. they are represented at assemblies;
 - c. they make an annual membership contribution to the funds of the Council;
 - d. they commit themselves to share the concerns of the Council with their local congregations;
 - e. they take such other opportunities as shall from time to time be found appropriate to work within the fellowship of the Council.

APPENDIX XI

EIGHTH ASSEMBLY THIRD DRAFT BUDGET – SUMMARY
- REVISION JUNE 1995

(all figures are in Swiss francs)		Notes		
EXPENDITURE		1	Budget 1998	Actual 1991
1. ASSEMBLY PLANNING COMMITTEE			350,000	196,341
2. ASSEMBLY WORSHIP – Committee, worship, expenses			217,500	193,005
3. ASSEMBLY OFFICE & ADMINISTRATION			1,951,000	1,564,377
4. ZIMBABWE OFFICE, LOCAL EXPENSES	2		500,000	0
5. COMMUNICATIONS – Press, media	3		1,350,000	1,051,420
6. PUBLICATIONS			800,000	634,371
7. LANGUAGE SERVICE – Translation, interpretation			1,084,920	935,685
8. SUBSIDIES PARTICIPANTS – Delegates, advisers, guests	4		2,105,000	1,124,489
9. STAFF & CO-OPTED STAFF	5		498,680	214,577
10. STEWARDS			606,500	324,914
11. ON SITE FACILITIES & EXPENSES	6		800,000	3,207,396
12. PROGRAMME COSTS – Market place, CUV, jubilee	7		100,000	0
13. REGIONAL PREPARATORY MEETINGS & TEAM VISITS	8		250,000	6,446
14. PRE-ASSEMBLY PROGRAMMES & CONSULTATIONS	8		250,000	156,863
TOTAL EXPENSES			10,863,600	
15. CONTINGENCIES (approx 10% expenditure)	9		1,136,400	
TOTAL EXPENDITURE BUDGET			12,000,000	9,609,884
INCOME				
DELEGATES REGISTRATION FEES	10	700,000	781,405	
OTHER FEES – Visitors, etc.	10	600,000	661,960	
CONTRIBUTIONS MEMBER CHURCHES	11		6,414,626	
CONTRIBUTION WCC GENERAL FUNDS – 400,000pa 7 years		2,800,000	1,713,663	
INVESTMENT INCOME, EXCHANGE	12		895,289	
			4,100,000	10,466,943
TOTAL REQUIREMENT MEMBER CHURCHES			7,900,000	
BALANCE SURPLUS	13			857,059

Notes : General – the basis has been the Seventh Assembly actual costs. Many expenses depend on decisions yet to be taken. Income and expenses relating to “self payers” are not included.

1. Rates of exchange are taken at CHF 1.44 = US\$, ZIM \$ = CHF 6.5. The Assembly account is maintained in US\$.
2. At Canberra all local costs were covered by local income. This may not be possible in Zimbabwe.
3. No firm information is available. There is unlikely to be a large local contribution, as there was at Canberra.
4. This is based on past numbers, but there is no detailed information available at present.
5. Based on 90 Executive staff, 90 administrative staff and 28 co-opted staff. Executive staff travel is charged to Unit travel budgets (as previously).
6. Based on very preliminary data from the University. At Canberra many things were charged to this budget, which have been charged to other budget heads this time.
7. No firm data is available – this is a notional figure.
8. No firm details have been agreed on pre-Assembly activities, so these are notional figures.
9. A figure of 10% is built in for contingencies. As the budget develops, this can be reduced to 5%.
10. No decision has been taken on registration or visitors' fees – this is based solely on Canberra.
11. So far 60 pledges have been received, but many churches have not yet responded.
12. There were substantial interest and exchange gains at Canberra. It is impossible to estimate for 1998.
13. This is just to balance the budget. It is always hoped that there will be a balance to carry forward to the following Assembly to assist with initial expenses.

APPENDIX XII

DOCUMENTS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST *

Report of the Moderator (5.5)

Report of the General Secretary (5.6)

Activities Report of Unit I: Unity and Renewal (1.1)

Activities Report of Unit II: Churches in Mission: Health, Education, Witness (2.1)

Alcoholism and Drug Addiction: Challenges to the Church (B.3)

Activities Report of Unit III: Justice, Peace and Creation (3.1)

Interim Report on the Presence of the WCC at the Fourth UN World Conference on Women and the NGO Forum 1995 (3.3)

Recommendations from the Mandated Working Group on Youth (C.6)

Activities Report of Unit IV: Sharing and Service (4.1)

Strategy for Jubilee – A Four Year Plan: 1995-1998

General Secretariat: Offices on Relationships and Communication, Management and Finance (5.1);

Programme Coordination Report (5.2)

Progress Report on the Programme to Overcome Violence (6.1)

The WCC and the Ecumenical Development Cooperative Society (6.2)

Draft of Framework Document on Racism (6.5)

Towards a Common Understanding and Vision of the WCC – interim report (6.7)

The Churches, Population and Development (revised) (6.8)

Humanising the Structures of “Global Governance” – address by Dr M. M. Thomas (6.11)

Back and Forward to “Civil Society” –

address by Dr Rubem César Fernandez (6.12)

Reflections on the Eighth Assembly Theme (6.3 – Appendix 1)

Meditations and Bible Studies in preparation for the Eighth Assembly (6.3 – Appendix 2)

Report of the Finance Committee (7.2)

Financial Report of the World Council of Churches 1994

Annual Report of the World Council of Churches 1994

* *Numbers in parentheses indicate the number of the document;
available in English, French, German and Spanish.*

